

Sport Environment Assessments (“**SEA**”) serve a dual function in both addressing and preventing maltreatment, discrimination and other prohibited behaviour related to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (“**UCCMS**”). A SEA is designed to identify and remedy alleged systemic issues.

Unlike an investigation, in a SEA, there is no complainant or respondent. Survey respondents and interviewees (“**Assessment Participants**”) are asked to provide answers that describe their experiences. Therefore, the information in the SEA reflects how the Assessment Participants perceived the issues, systems or dynamics within the sport environment subject to the SEA.

The answers that Assessment Participants provide in interviews or to surveys are not subject to further examination to establish validity; it constitutes their individual perspectives.

Hockey Canada and Hockey in Canada

Sport Environment Assessment: Phase One Assessment Report

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1. Introduction

In the spring of 2023, the Independent Assessor (the “Assessor”) was engaged by the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner of Canada (“OSIC”) and appointed to a Sport Environment Assessment (the “SEA”) of the sport of ice hockey in Canada and Hockey Canada, as the national governing body recognized by the Canadian Government as responsible for ice hockey in Canada, and a signatory to the Abuse-Free Sport Program. OSIC has the authority to independently address systemic issues related to maltreatment, discrimination, and other prohibited behaviour under the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport (the “UCCMS”). As articulated by OSIC on its website, SEAs “seek to understand the problem and its root causes, and then look at possible solutions, all of which are ultimately presented in a published report.”

Over the past several years, Hockey Canada has been under intense scrutiny for issues related to maltreatment in the sport, including abuse, harassment, and discrimination. While there is much work that remains to be done to address these long-standing issues, Hockey Canada has taken several promising steps to change the culture of hockey. Some of these include overhauling their leadership, introducing policies to address and prevent maltreatment, launching an Independent Third Party (“ITP”) to receive complaints of maltreatment at all levels of hockey and, arguably most importantly, becoming a program signatory to OSIC and the Abuse-free Sport program. These steps lay a necessary foundation to support further and ongoing efforts meant to ensure everyone can enjoy hockey in a safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport environment for current and future participants in hockey.

To provide guidance in understanding the goals and scope of the SEA, OSIC provided a discussion document, (the “Discussion Guide”), which indicates the SEA is concerned with all forms of maltreatment, discrimination and prohibited behaviours as defined in section 5 of the UCCMS. The Discussion Guide sets out the overview and goal of the SEA:

This [SEA] entails undertaking an independent and subject matter expert driven examination of systemic issues regarding different forms of maltreatment

discrimination and other prohibited behaviour under the UCCMS which are alleged to prevail in Canadian ice hockey.

...

The [SEA] seeks to identify (i) the nature and scope of systemic issues related to the UCCMS in Canadian ice hockey, (ii) the root causes and risk factors leading to the prevalence of any such issues, and (iii) sustainable solutions to eliminate and prevent future occurrence of maltreatment and/or prohibited behaviours in order to cultivate a more inclusive and safer environment for those who participate in ice hockey in Canada.

While this [SEA] primarily intends to address specific issues noted in this sport environment, it will also seek to identify wider system issues, root causes, risk factors and potential solutions that could apply to other sport environments and sports in Canada.

The Discussion Guide indicates that Hockey Canada should be a “preliminary focus” in the SEA, given its capacity as a National Sport Organization (“NSO”), and the SEA should seek to “encourage” participation from impacted organizations and participants at “different levels” in the sport. The SEA was encouraged to include participants who are “reflective of Canada’s diverse society” and who participate in different capacities in the “hockey ecosystem.” Further, the Discussion Guide noted the SEA should not attempt to duplicate other past and concurrent reviews related to hockey in Canada (for example, the 2022 Cromwell Governance Review), but look to ensure the findings of other relevant examinations could be relied upon, or drawn from, as the SEA considers similar themes. This could include, for instance, examining how elements of authority and influence impact the prevalence and perpetration of alleged systemic issues related to the UCCMS.

Given the considerable population size the scope of the SEA could seek to engage, the Assessor was encouraged, in the Discussion Guide, to develop an action plan which would define the SEA process, including employing a “multi-faceted methodology” and forming a multi-disciplinary team that would support the Assessor and SEA, which may include representation by athletes and Canadian hockey ecosystem expertise, as well as knowledge in effective process and participation methodology. The Assessor engaged with process subject-matter experts (the “SEA

Team”) and prepared a proposal document, which was submitted to OSIC, and the SEA scoping phase one (“Phase One”) proposal was eventually approved in August 2023 (the “Phase One Plan”). Based on the considerable scope of the undertaking of this SEA, OSIC determined that the SEA would occur over at least two phases.

In this Phase One Assessment Report (the “Phase One Assessment Report”), we provide an outline of the Phase One undertakings, including its goals and methodology. The Phase One learning is summarized, together with the feedback and responses from Guidance Group participants, who were assembled as experienced thought-leaders from across the hockey ecosystem, to provide insights and guidance on the SEA as it proceeds. Finally, we set out a summary of the recommendations in connection with the SEA phase two engagement plan (“Phase Two”) based on the learnings of Phase One of the SEA.

1.1. Phase One Plan

As noted above, the Phase One Plan was approved in August 2023. The stated goals of the SEA were:

- A. Identify the nature and scope of systemic issues related to the UCCMS in Canadian ice hockey;*
- B. Identify the contributing factors and risk factors leading to the prevalence of any such issues;*
- C. Identify sustainable solutions to eliminate and prevent future occurrences of maltreatment and/or prohibited behaviours to cultivate a more inclusive and safer environment for those who participate in hockey in Canada;*
- D. Share implementation approach/tool that will equip Hockey Canada to make progress towards a more inclusive and safer environment and position the organization to track its progress over time and course correct where needed.*

The Phase One Plan indicates the purpose was: to review and understand the materials available and the relevant stakeholders participating in the hockey ecosystem, to inform the understanding of the questions to be asked in the SEA, and to determine to whom the questions

should be asked. Given the Assessor and the SEA Team, to be free from conflict, are not familiar with the sport of hockey, Phase One was an important step to understand the hockey ecosystem, the current challenges, the recent research and data available, initiatives being undertaken, and the depth and breadth of issues to be canvassed.

The Phase One Plan indicates the SEA would begin with a document review (the “Document Review”). The purpose of the Phase One Document Review was to review and provide a summary inventory of relevant literature to be considered and drawn upon during the SEA. In addition, the Phase One Plan sought to form a Guidance Group of experienced thought-leaders and subject-matter experts in the hockey ecosystem (the “Guidance Group”). While it was recommended that the Guidance Group would be engaged throughout the SEA, the Phase One Plan outlined a series of specific engagement opportunities, including one-on-one interviews and a multi-party workshop to confirm the SEA objectives, the purpose of the Guidance Group, the questions to be understood in the SEA, and to identify key stakeholder communities to engage with in later stages of the SEA.

Finally, the Phase One Plan indicates that through the work and learning done in Phase One, an engagement plan would be developed which would confirm the SEA objectives, propose participant stakeholder groups to engage with, and suggest methodology for engaging and reporting on the outcomes from this broad engagement. This engagement plan was issued to OSIC on February 16, 2024 (the “Phase Two Plan”). Now that the Phase Two Plan has been approved, we recommend it to be included as an appendix to this Phase One Assessment Report and published together by OSIC to communicate to the broader community about the SEA and to encourage participation in future phases of work.

1.2. Methodology

As noted above, the Phase One Plan articulated the necessity for the SEA to understand the relevant literature to be considered, as well as to draw on the expertise of the Guidance Group to develop an effective engagement plan. To begin the Document Review, the SEA Team reviewed 59 relevant documents, described in detail in Section 1.2.1, to identify areas of both

promise and challenge. The list below includes a summary of key areas for consideration relative to Hockey Canada's success on this journey, identified through the Document Review:

- Hockey Canada undoubtedly has both a thought leadership and tangible responsibility to shape the culture of hockey in Canada. This requires (re)building trusting relationships across its 13 Member Branches (in this Phase One Assessment Report, the term "Member Branches" is used to refer to the Member Branches set out in Hockey Canada's bylaws, as duly constituted Provincial and Territorial Hockey Federations, who represent their constituents at Hockey Canada meetings. This ensures alignment and consistency in the dissemination of resources and supports throughout the greater hockey ecosystem;
- To engage participants and individual stakeholders who are part of Hockey Canada sanctioned programming on the Abuse-Free Sport journey, Hockey Canada must ensure that the materials provided to them on Safe Sport, especially policies, are accessible and disseminated in such a way that the materials are easy to engage with. This will be conducive to clarifying communication and promoting participation and input from various communities within the Hockey Canada ecosystem as it pertains to advocacy and decision-making;
- While Hockey Canada has taken important steps to demonstrate their commitment for Safe Sport, further efforts via thoughtful communication and community engagement are required to clarify what actions are supporting their words, particularly in response to calls for change from players, parents, academics and other stakeholders alike, to demonstrate that Hockey Canada is both listening and learning;
- The effectiveness of Hockey Canada's Safe Sport work will be dictated by their adoption of a safeguarding culture - one that promotes athlete's safety, human rights, health, and well-being as a day-to-day organizational priority, not just related to specific periods of competition or awareness (i.e., outside of Black or National Indigenous History Month, or ensuring the advancement of their Safe Sport efforts continue when public attention on the organization dies down);

- The demographic breakdown of both staff and players needs to be further considered by conducting intersectional analyses of participation and participation patterns focused on significance - i.e., when does leadership become exclusively White and male? where is racialized girls' participation in the game the lowest? - to create specific interventions to improve the experience and enhance the inclusion of those communities.

Ultimately, there are numerous areas of change that Hockey Canada has been asked to show commitment to, impacting in both the short and long term, which would be a daunting challenge for any NSO, but the time for action is now. It is the intention of the SEA to support Hockey Canada's journey and goals with respect to Abuse-Free Sport.

1.2.1. Document Review

The SEA Team engaged a graduate-level academic researcher with knowledge and expertise in sport safeguarding to perform the Document Review related to the Canadian hockey landscape. The SEA Team and the researcher identified and collected the available documents, including policy, literature, and media concerning hockey and maltreatment in Canada, to be included in the Document Review. This allowed for the SEA Team to collaboratively define the SEA research scope. Of the 59 total documents reviewed, the majority were published within the last three years. Many of the materials reviewed are available in both English and French. This Phase One Assessment Report has been made available in both English and French.

The Document Review enabled the SEA Team to organize the available material to align with how maltreatment is defined and understood under the UCCMS and included material across six areas of interest:

Area of Interest	# Of Materials Reviewed
Hockey Canada Maltreatment Policies and Reports	9
Governance	1
Academic Literature	19
Participant Information, Experiences and Testimonials	5
Media Articles	23
Additional Materials: Hockey Canada Strategy Reports	2

Figure 1 Summary of Document Review Material

Documents Provided by OSIC and Hockey Canada

At the outset of the SEA, OSIC provided a package of documents as a foundation for the initial SEA scope discussions and for consideration in the Document Review. This package largely included policy documents that were provided to OSIC by Hockey Canada via the formal process “Request for Information to Impacted Sport Organization.” In addition, the package included an expression of interest to participate in an OSIC review, based on the reports of a high-level player scout (the “Expression of Interest”). This individual, despite multiple attempts to report, did not find a satisfactory independent safe sport avenue to report and seek resolution for an alleged contravention of the UCCMS related to discrimination towards players. The Expression of Interest outlines how safe sport concerns were not addressed by several organizations, resulting in the scout approaching OSIC. In addition, OSIC provided other material, including an in-depth list of related, publicly available articles, media and literature, an academic article presented at a Hockey Canada “Beyond the Boards” summit hosted in September 2023, and the OSIC administrative and guidance documents for sport environment assessments.

The documents reviewed from Hockey Canada included the following:

- *Policy regarding the Adoption of UCCMS*
- *Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy*
- *Code of Conduct Policy*
- *Gender Expression/Gender Identity Policy*
- *Hockey Canada Rulebook: Rule 11*
- *Speak Out – Parents Guide*
- *Tracking Discrimination in Hockey (Rule 11.4)*
- *Tracking Maltreatment in Sanctioned Hockey 2022 – 2023 Report*
- *Hockey Canada Employee Surveys, and Staff Demographic Breakdown*

- *Hockey Canada Demographic Surveys and Registrants Demographic Breakdown*
- *Hockey Canada Action Plan: Shatter the Code of Silence and Eliminate Toxic Behaviour in and around Canada's Game (the "Action Plan")*
- *Hockey Canada EDI Path Forward (the "EDI Path Forward")*

Following the Document Review, the SEA team further inquired with Hockey Canada on the status of actions specified in, and how Hockey Canada is prioritizing, the various initiatives that are ongoing and planned, to clarify and demonstrate that the change happening is meaningful and system-wide, rather than a check-box exercise. This inquiry was made because, while it is evident Hockey Canada has been engaged in various initiatives, the status and results of each program and strategy from the aforementioned list of Hockey Canada documents are less clear at this point in time. Prior to this Phase One Discussion Document being issued, Hockey Canada provided a list of their ongoing initiatives related to the UCCMS, which was reviewed and is attached here at **Appendix A**.

Additional Documents

In addition to the documents provided by OSIC and Hockey Canada, the Document Review included academic literature, media, and governance reviews.

The *Hockey Canada Governance Review 2022, The Honourable Thomas Cromwell, C.C.* (the "Cromwell Report") provided a significant insight for the SEA Team to understand the relevant governance issues as Hockey Canada's Board of Directors (the "Board") and CEO have agreed to implement all the Cromwell Report's recommendations on bylaw and governance changes. Hockey Canada reports that some of the recommendations have already been implemented, while others, according to Hockey Canada, are in progress or planned for in the future. The Cromwell Report's conclusions and recommendations are based on interviews with more than 80 individuals, and, among many other findings, found that participants, sponsors, and others in Hockey Canada's ecosystem had lost confidence in the organization. At the root of this loss of

confidence is concern about good governance and good governance will be at the root of rebuilding that confidence.

Implementing the Cromwell Report's recommended changes will require Hockey Canada, its Board, and its stakeholders to work together differently than they have in the past. The Cromwell Report flagged changes needed to the Board nomination process to provide Hockey Canada with the wide range, depth, and diversity of experience, both professional and personal, that the Board collectively requires to govern this complex organization and to lead significant cultural change. The Cromwell Report's recommendations on the Board nominations process were implemented in 2023 leading up to the election of a new Board which began its term in 2024. The Cromwell Report observed that Hockey Canada has an important leadership role to play, but as an NSO, it cannot, by itself, bring about the change for which so many are calling; this requires efforts across the sport's ecosystem.

In the academic literature, the research showed a number of risk factors in perpetuating maltreatment. Sport cultures that value winning at all costs, profit over people, substantial and absolute power vested in authority figures, strong team cultures around conforming to ideals of masculinity, early isolation from non-sport communities as well as inadequate education on safety and appropriate practices, are all vulnerable to maltreatment risk. The SEA Team also considered population-specific risks of maltreatment among people with disabilities, women, girls and gender diverse communities, and racialized people, and looked at challenges and best practices around safeguarding.

The Document Review also included a small scope media review to understand how maltreatment in hockey has been discussed in the media. This included significant coverage of Hockey Canada's handling of sexual assault cases, and coverage of how Hockey Canada's actions and missteps resulted in lost sponsorships. Reporting in the media coverage was critical of Hockey Canada as an organization for avoiding accountability and initial resistance to adoption of Safe Sport mechanisms, as well as inefficient communication with participant organizations to help realize changes set out in Hockey Canada's policies. The SEA Team also reviewed coverage

of the more recent promise of changes in leadership and new positions added to the organization, including the Vice President of Sport Safety and the Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, recent work on collecting and releasing the incidence and prevalence of incidents of discrimination, new mandatory training on “Respect” for Canadian Hockey League coaches and players, and the Beyond the Boards Summit which took place in September 2023.

The Document Review also included *A Framework for Change: How to Achieve a Culture Shift for Gymnastics in Canada 2023, McLaren Global Solutions* (the “McLaren Report”). The McLaren Report was useful to consider the connection made in that review, between the risk and prevalence of maltreatment and issues in sport culture, both at the high-performance level and at the grassroots level. The McLaren Report cites the work done by Own the Podium (“OTP”) to assess culture within high-performance disciplines of gymnastics in Canada and recommends developing a companion tool to systematically assess and audit culture at the grassroots, developmental level of the Canadian amateur sport community. OTP worked with InnerLogic, a research firm with roots in the Canadian sports sector, which developed the *Culture of Excellence Assessment and Audit Tool* (the “CAAT”). As the McLaren Report indicates, the CAAT was developed through a “rigorous process of consultation and testing over several years including OTP, the [Canadian Paralympic Committee] and the Sport Institute Network, among other experts in high-performance sport and organizational behaviour.”

At page 97, the McLaren Report explains that the existing tool is designed to measure culture according to two dimensions: “Person dimensions” and “Performance dimensions” and that the Person dimensions could help, in part, to address the “human experience” as a condition of funding.

The McLaren Report recommends that all NSOs in Canada adopt a common culture assessment evaluation tool to allow a comparison of cultures between NSOs and track longitudinal data to assess if progress is being made over time. The SEA Team notes that new tools are emerging and being tested currently to assess culture in recreational and youth competition contexts that may become relevant for hockey in Canada. The opportunity posed by the McLaren Report, to

compare disciplines within a sport, and even different NSOs, using an evidence-based and tested tool that addresses sport culture, has shaped the SEA Team proposed Phase Two approach to develop a deeper understanding of hockey's culture issues. The Phase Two Plan sets out an engagement approach to understand how hockey culture can most effectively be addressed to foster an environment of physical and psychological well-being and reduce the risk and prevalence of maltreatment in the sport.

After compiling and analyzing all of these documents, a 75 page, "Document Review Report" was produced, summarizing the material reviewed. From the Document Review Report, recurring themes and key needs facing hockey in Canada were classed into nine topics with related questions (the "9 Needs"). The 9 Needs provide a framework of topics that were used in the Guidance Group engagement workshop and the initial interviews with Guidance Group participants, to confirm and inform the SEA objectives, to inform which participant groups to engage, and to inform the development of the Phase Two Plan for the engagement plan.

1.2.2. Guidance Group

The purpose of the Guidance Group is to ensure relevant sport community and subject-matter experts participate in identifying what the SEA should seek to understand and who the relevant and possible participants should be. The Guidance Group plays a role in advising the SEA Team to ensure adequate representation of participants from across the hockey community, including Hockey Canada, that will lead to thorough understanding of UCCMS issues at different levels in the sport.

The SEA Team invited a range of thought leaders, including recently retired athletes, current advocates, hockey administrators and stakeholders with expertise on Safe Sport, equity, inclusion, diversity, and good governance in sport to form the Guidance Group in the fall of 2023. The aim was to have diverse representation from the hockey ecosystem that are well-versed in understanding the challenges currently facing hockey in Canada and would inform possible stakeholder and community groups to be included in the SEA. While a goal of the Guidance Group is to allow for a range of viewpoints, including those both supportive and critical of Hockey

Canada, individual Guidance Group participants are not asked to provide evidence or make conclusions, and have no decision-making authority.

To create a well-informed jumping off point for input from the Guidance Group, they were provided with a summary of the 9 Needs developed in the Document Review. For each of the 9 Needs, questions were posed to encourage consideration as to how hockey in Canada can become a safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport experience for all.

The Guidance Group met virtually for its initial workshop on December 15, 2023. As noted, prior to the workshop, the Guidance Group participants were provided with a summary of the 9 Needs and related questions. At the session, the group discussed the outcomes of the SEA Team's review of documents and analysis of the issues and contributing factors around maltreatment in the sport of hockey in Canada. In this first workshop session, questions were posed to Guidance Group participants to understand:

- To what extent has the SEA Team fully understood the issues identified as articulated in the 9 Needs;
- To verify and add to the engagement plan for the next phase of work, in order to appropriately engage relevant participant groups in the Canadian hockey community; and
- To provide perspectives on appropriate steps to allow Hockey Canada to understand and invest in any gaps in their organization that leave them vulnerable to maltreatment risk and ultimately, to strengthen their capacity to achieve well-being across the organization.

In January 2024, follow up interviews were scheduled with each Guidance Group participant to allow for anonymous and personalized reflections that may not have been feasible in a group setting. In particular, the SEA Team wanted to gauge whether, in the Guidance Group's view, the Document Review had well-captured and framed the issues identified, whether the engagement approach could be improved or required further considerations, and what the views were of Guidance Group participants in connection with publishing the names of Guidance Group participants in SEA publications. It was proposed that the names of each Guidance Group

participant would be included in SEA publications with an explanation of the role of the group (that it is an idea generating space with expertise in the hockey ecosystem and not a decision-making group). The response was overwhelming agreement from Guidance Group participants that there was value in publishing their names in a transparent manner, particularly as the role of the Guidance Group is to inform the process, rather than to provide evidence or determine outcomes.

For the Guidance Group interviews, an interview guide was created to carry out the semi-structured conversational interviews in a consistent way, to inform this SEA Phase One Assessment Report. Guidance Group participants were informed that the information they shared would be consolidated into key themes and not attributed to any individual. The interview guide includes the following topics:

- an overview of the SEA and how information will be managed and reported;
- feedback from Guidance Group participants on post-workshop reflections and thoughts;
- asked Guidance Group participants to consider the future and share what initiatives they felt would best support a psychologically and physically safe hockey in Canada, in 2024 and beyond;
- asked Guidance Group participants to share what initiatives or approaches have not worked in the past and what they had learned from those experiences; and
- asked Guidance Group participants to identify which stakeholders from the hockey ecosystem in Canada should be engaged in the SEA and how.

Broadly, Guidance Group participants indicated it was important to bring a diverse group of thought leaders with experience in hockey together who have different perspectives, questions, and ideas on how to tackle issues; but who share a common commitment to improving well-being in the sport of hockey in Canada. Guidance Group participants indicated they saw the SEA as a conduit to bring ideas from across Canada into an approach that is actionable. As one Guidance

Group participant put it: “This is the right moment for thought leaders in our community to come together.” Another reflected, “[the SEA] coming together will help everyone sing off the same sheet of music, understand the circumstances and see what part of the scope we can direct our efforts into.”

The SEA Team took note of how open, engaged, committed, and responsive Guidance Group participants were, to both participation in the December 15, 2023, workshop, and all follow-up communications. While the Guidance Group had a wide range of perspectives on the issues, there was a shared commitment and interest in this work. This is encouraging, given that all Guidance Group participants come to the SEA with a significant volume of other commitments in their respective roles.

1.2.3. Summary of Guidance Group Participants

Brock McGinnis – Brock is a former Ontario Hockey League (the “OHL”) and professional hockey player and is the first openly gay men’s professional hockey player and a leading activist in the LGBTQ+ space. His work to shift the conversation around sports and the LGBTQ+ community earned him recognition as one of The Hockey News 100 most influential people in hockey for 2022. In addition to his advocacy, education, and speaking work, Brock launched Alphabet Sports Collective to empower queer adults and allies to build a community and mobilize to be represented at every table within sport. Brock has a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Sports Communication from Laurentian University and is certified in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion from Cornell University.

Chante Eastmond – Chante is an experienced leader in the minor hockey world and the non-profit sector. She is particularly experienced in the non-profit sector; as a leader of Black and Indigenous descent, she is the co-founder and Executive Director for Hockey Equality. Hockey Equality’s mission is to create diversity at all levels of the game of hockey, focusing on representation, advocacy, and re-education in the minor hockey community, as well as lowering financial barriers. With in-depth knowledge of the needs in the hockey community, especially for equity-deserving youth athletes, Chante utilizes her years of hands-on experience and expertise

to grow the game of hockey for Black, Indigenous, and youths of color, as well as young female athletes.

Darren Cossar – From Nova Scotia, now Calgary-based, Darren is the Senior Vice-President, Member Engagement at Hockey Canada. Prior to his involvement with Hockey Canada, Darren spent 15 years working at a boys and girls club and is passionate about furthering opportunities for youth. After playing competitive hockey himself, he served as the Executive Director of Hockey Nova Scotia for 15 years. He was seconded by Hockey Canada to identify gaps in relation to the 13 Member Branches and lead the creation of the Member engagement department in 2018. This role focuses on connecting Hockey Canada to its 13 Member Branches who represent 600,000 player participants, as well as thousands of coaches, officials and administrators, from coast to coast to coast.

Haleigh Callison – Originally from Smithers, BC, Haleigh is a member of the Hwilitsum First Nation. She is the founder of Takoda Consulting - a consultancy focusing on male-dominated industries on how to better recruit, retain, and support women; she previously worked in the forestry sector in BC. Haleigh is a former UBC Varsity Women's Hockey player; she played professionally for 7 years both overseas and in the CWHL. She was the General Manager for Twist Performance & Wellness and a Strength & Conditioning Coach. Haleigh serves on the Board of Directors of BC Hockey as well as the UBC Alumni Advisory Council; she recently completed her MBA from Cornell University.

Michael Bruni – Mike was called to the Alberta Bar in 1978 and has an extensive experience working with administrative tribunals and government entities in regulatory law/procedure and process. He has worked with and led many national, provincial, and local not-for-profit organizations as a chair, board member, and advisor on governance and change management. Michael continues to volunteer and advise national, provincial, local boards and committees on governance and legal matters, including serving on the Board of Directors for the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada. In particular, Mike has been a dedicated hockey volunteer for 40 years; he previously chaired Hockey Alberta's Board of Directors and went on to serve on Hockey

Canada's Board, serving as Chair from 2011-2013. He also chaired the nominating committee for Hockey Canada's interim Board prior the election of the current Hockey Canada Board.

Natasha Johnston – Natasha is the Vice President of Sport Safety at Hockey Canada. In this role, she oversees Hockey Canada's safe sport portfolio, which includes developing sustainable solutions to address holistic player safety and maltreatment; Natasha works with Hockey Canada's 13 Member Branches to deliver strategic initiatives that promote the well-being of athletes, coaches, officials, and stakeholders and provide participants from coast to coast to coast with positive hockey experiences. Previously, Natasha was the executive director of Ringette Canada, and contributed to the Universal Code of Conduct to Prevent and Address Maltreatment in Sport as a national representative. Prior to this, she held roles with the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport and Football Canada.

Rico Phillips – A change-maker in hockey, in 2020, Rico became the OHL's first Director of Cultural Diversity and Inclusion. In this role, reporting to the Commissioner, Phillips established and led a committee to provide guidance and expertise to the League and teams to help ensure that the game is inclusive for all players, staff and fans. Rico began his role in the game as a high school hockey referee in the 1980's. In 2010, he founded the Flint Inner-City Youth Hockey Program in an effort to increase racial and socioeconomic inclusivity in minor hockey. In 2019 he was awarded the National Hockey League's ("NHL") prestigious Willie O'Ree Community Hero Award. He is a retired member of the City of Flint Fire Department.

Sheldon Kennedy – Sheldon is a former professional hockey player, who won a Memorial Cup, World Junior Gold Medal, and skated for three teams in his eight-year NHL career. He is best known for his courageous decision to charge his Major Junior Hockey league coach with sexual assault for the abuse he suffered over a five-year period while a teenager under his care. Sheldon co-founded the Respect Group, which has educated 2.3 million people to prevent bullying, abuse, discrimination and harassment in schools, sport organizations, and the workplace. He also co-founded the Calgary Child Advocacy Centre, offering full wrap-around services for victims of child abuse. Sheldon has been instrumental in bringing governments, public and private sector

partners together to work collaboratively to influence policy change and improve the way child abuse is handled.

Wayne McNeil – Wayne McNeil of Calgary has a long history working with youth and sport; he is formerly a chairperson for the Alberta Gymnastics Federation and served for 6 years as a founding Board member of the Calgary and Area Child Advocacy Centre. These volunteer roles solidified his commitment to child advocacy and led Wayne to co-found Respect Group Inc.; Canada’s first online abuse, discrimination, bullying and harassment prevention training program for community/sport organizations, schools and corporations. Wayne has a professional background in Information Technology and Project Management that he developed through positions with Bell Canada, 3Com Corporation and Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC). In 2007, Wayne was awarded the Canadian Red Cross Caring Award for his leadership in the promotion of violence and abuse prevention education.

2. Overview of Phase One Learning: The 9 Needs

As described above, following the Document Review, the SEA Team summarized the recurring themes and key essential challenges facing Hockey Canada and hockey in Canada, as the 9 Needs. The 9 Needs provide a framework of discussion topics and were used in the Guidance Group engagement workshop, the Guidance Group interviews, and will inform the questions to be asked in the engagement phase of the SEA. Below is a summary of the 9 Needs developed in the Document Review process:

NINE NEEDS IDENTIFIED FROM POLICY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

FOR PREVENTING MALTREATMENT and ACHIEVING WELL-BEING IN HOCKEY

- 1.** Obtain commitment from leadership to achieve well-being - a safer, welcoming and fun sport environment.
- 2.** Increase accountability for implementing key initiatives and changes between Hockey Canada and its members – clarity on roles and responsibilities.
- 3.** Address policy gaps and achieve greater policy clarity.
- 4.** Mend gaps in coordinated approaches to communication, education, and training – about preventing maltreatment in the sport of hockey.
- 5.** Define and operationalize behaviours and actions that contribute to a healthy hockey culture.
- 6.** Foster a coordinated approach to culture change throughout the Hockey Canada system.
- 7.** Understand and address barriers to enacting stronger safety systems and safeguard behaviors in hockey.
- 8.** Establish a healthy balance between a focus on performance and a culture of well-being, physical and psychological safety.
- 9.** Fix gaps in information / data management.

Figure 2 The Nine Needs Summary

The following section is a summary of each of the 9 Needs, together with the related sentiments and feedback from Guidance Group participants. In this section, a description of each “need” is followed by “Guidance Group Responses” that align with that need, then by related questions and opportunities, “Guidance Group Related Opportunities”, in which Guidance Group participants have identified initiatives that, in their view, would best address each need.

As noted above, the Document Review, combined with the perceptions and experiences of Guidance Group participants, are summarized here to both review and understand the materials available and concerns of relevant stakeholders participating in the hockey ecosystem, which will inform the understanding of the questions to be asked in the SEA, and to determine to whom the questions should be asked. The summary below is not a conclusion or a finding of fact, but perceptions to shape the approach and issues to be explored robustly with participants across the Hockey Canada ecosystem in Phase 2 of the SEA. At the conclusion of Phase 2, the SEA will

result in recommendations to prevent maltreatment and improve well-being in the sport of hockey.

2.1. Commitment from leadership to achieving well-being: a safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport experience

- What words and actions need to be carried out at all levels of Hockey Canada and Member Branches to demonstrate commitment and willingness to influence and shape a better culture?
- What would it look like to demonstrate a real internal commitment to address maltreatment issues?
- What are opportunities for dialogue between Hockey Canada and athletes and stakeholders to share their experiences, learn from them and enact change?
- How to rebuild participant and public trust in Hockey Canada through improved accountability, listening and communicating transparently on plans and progress?

2.1.1. Guidance Group Responses:

While a range of perspectives were provided, several Guidance Group members reported their views that in the period leading up to the tenure of the new Board and CEO at Hockey Canada, an “entrenched culture has tended to revert to the status quo.” Several Guidance Group participants pointed out instances of Hockey Canada’s pushback to various proposed governance changes in recent years, demonstrating, in their view, the culture internally has been difficult to change. The perspective of several Guidance Group participants is that, to date, Hockey Canada has not taken on a leadership role for both hockey and other sports, in preventing maltreatment in Canada.

Guidance Group participants shared the view that Hockey Canada has begun to address the issues, in particular through its Interim Board and with new leadership following the November 2023 Board Elections, but previously, change was not embraced when compared to other sport

leaders on these issues; Sport Manitoba, Skate Canada, and Ontario Soccer were mentioned as leading examples. The difference noted by Guidance Group participants is that, in these example organizations, the prevention of maltreatment and improved culture was prioritized and not just a box to be checked, but “embraced by leadership.” The consensus of most Guidance Group participants was that issues of maltreatment are not going away and the approach to get results, is to embrace doing the work in a foundational way.

Guidance Group participants also spoke about their frustrations in connection with a disconnect between Hockey Canada and grassroots hockey communities and participants. They indicated there has been “too much talk and not enough action and follow up.” Several Guidance Group participants spoke to experiences where Hockey Canada was not open enough to hearing and learning about resources, tools, and approaches that have worked and what the needs are at the community and grassroots level. Some Guidance Group participants indicated the current structure builds in disconnection between the grassroots level of the sport and Hockey Canada. An example of this disconnect was reported:

When the Ontario Minor Hockey Association has an issue it wants to bring to Hockey Canada, it must first go through its representative at the Ontario Hockey Federation, who then brings it to Hockey Canada; therefore, limiting direct access due to the requirement to navigate this separation.

2.1.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

New leadership and a renewed commitment to improve culture and prevent maltreatment: One stated goal of Hockey Canada’s new CEO, Katherine Henderson and its new Board, elected in November 2023, is to become a leader across the sport sector in preventing maltreatment. The commitment of the leadership of Hockey Canada to improving culture and fostering a safer sport environment was demonstrated in convening the *Beyond the Boards Summit* in September 2023, designed to tackle one root cause identified at the heart of racism, sexism, homophobia, discrimination, and exclusion in hockey: toxic masculinity.

Guidance Group participants, including those carrying some skepticism about Hockey Canada's ability to implement much-needed changes, agreed that the commitment of the new leadership is important in achieving results and implementing concrete actions for a safer culture in the sport. It was also noted by numerous Guidance Group participants that Hockey Canada's shift to a more diverse set of skills, experiences, and backgrounds in its 2024 Board brings necessary and welcome diversity of thought, into the oversight of hockey. As one Guidance Group participant put it, "There is a real will from Hockey Canada, and our sport system to try and move the bar – together, we can do that."

2.2. Accountability for implementing key initiatives and changes between Hockey Canada and its participants: clarity on roles and responsibilities

- How to establish a shared understanding of the governance relationship between Hockey Canada's Board, Executive, its Member Branches and participants, to clarify who is responsible for what?
- What is the progress on key initiatives Hockey Canada is undertaking?
- Where are the opportunities to report to participants or the public on progress of key initiatives/changes outlined in various documents, including the Hockey Canada EDI Path Forward and the Action Plan, implementation of Cromwell Report recommendations, and others?
- How can sanctions for bad behaviour or failure to adhere to maltreatment expectations be more feasibly applied (for example, a stepwise process) to ensure Hockey Canada and participants are accountable to policies and commitments?

2.2.1. Guidance Group Responses:

Many Guidance Group participants reported, in their view, that there is an inherent tension in the accountability relationship between the 13 Member Branches and Hockey Canada. A Guidance Group participant questioned how much progress is even possible under the current governance structure, in part, because Hockey Canada is focused on high-performance and

inherently disconnected from the grassroots and the needs of minor hockey. Another Guidance Group participant observed that Hockey Canada's focus has always been on the elite level athletes and providing marketing machinery for events such as World Juniors and elite athletes, whereas, in reality, very few athletes achieve college scholarship level or higher. It was agreed by many Guidance Group participants that this focus on elite athletes, over the years, was not helping young athletes become healthy individuals, and that encouraging players to chase the elite side of the sport resulted in a high cost for families. Guidance Group participants discussed whether Hockey Canada has a role to play in minor hockey, or if it would be better suited to exclusively run the elite side of the sport. Another Guidance Group participant pointed out that grassroots participants do not always feel that they are getting the support they want and need from Hockey Canada, as Member Branches are on their own to deliver all minor hockey programming, which by all accounts is mostly effective in delivering at the grassroots level.

One possible approach suggested was to explore delegating control to grassroots participation within Member Branches' jurisdiction via a Memorandum of Understanding with Hockey Canada. It was observed that the Member Branches can play an influential role as agents of change or be a barrier to change, depending on how they are engaged. As one Guidance Group participant reflected, "Listen to Member Branches about what they need and help them make it easier and not more complicated."

Guidance Group participants reflected that it can be difficult to understand and track what work is being implemented or carried out by Hockey Canada. This was described as a problem of "performative initiatives" without the action on the ground. According to some Guidance Group participants, there have been experiences where it appears Hockey Canada pays "lip service" to initiatives, including education initiatives but does not appear to follow-up. Guidance Group participants spoke to being part of conversations with Hockey Canada staff, where documentation was requested to confirm the conversation had occurred, and it was perceived as a disingenuous effort, whereby the staff participant might use the documentation as cover in anticipation of bad press in the future, as opposed to a real commitment to change through concrete initiatives and actions.

In the view of some Guidance Group participants, there needs to be more accountability. One participant noted, “When I see the same people there, running departments, I question the commitment to change.” The initial commitment to improving Safe Sport initiatives and outcomes expressed by Hockey Canada’s new CEO and Board was acknowledged positively by Guidance Group participants, yet concerns were shared as to what extent staff were willing or able to adapt to a new leadership’s expectations to achieve results in this area. As one Guidance Group participant observed, “People are the products of their environment; can an individual change a culture? This is a daunting task.”

2.2.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Hockey Canada share a public facing strategy on all maltreatment, safety, and culture initiatives: Feedback from the Guidance Group made it clear that, while it was accepted that Hockey Canada has undertaken various initiatives to achieve results on preventing maltreatment, currently, in their view, there is not an adequate public-facing strategy to track all the initiatives under way. Currently, Hockey Canada coordinates and manages their efforts in this area using an internally shared project management tool with regular touchpoints for the senior leadership who “own” respective actions, as linked to Hockey's Strategic Plan.

Guidance Group participants indicated that a public-facing reporting metric, that could be used to communicate the efforts and how they fit together and their progress, would be a benefit to both Member Branches and the greater hockey community, so stakeholders and the public can better understand what work is being done internally and the status of that work.

2.3. Address policy gaps and establish greater policy clarity

- What prevents or enables a common set of Safe Sport policies from being adopted by Member Branches? (i.e. Rule 11 adopted by Member Branches but not UCCMS.) This question emerges, given that in Canadian Sport, provincial and territorial member associations are

normally empowered to form their own policies. However, to avoid a patchwork and inconsistent approach, some sports have adopted what is seen as the gold standard: all provincial and territorial members bodies, alongside their NSO, adopt a uniform pan-Canadian set of UCCMS aligned Safe Sport policies.

- Are the policies accessible for Member Branches and participants to use day-to-day when encountering an issue and needing to engage with it (for example, a complaint process)?
- Are the policies consistent across Hockey Canada's policy suite? Do they align in terms of who they apply to, and are they aligned with UCCMS?

2.3.1. Guidance Group Responses:

Some Guidance Group participants pointed to a lack of effectiveness in implementing certain initiatives through clear, effective policy development and implementation. For example, while there were a wide range of perspectives from the Guidance Group regarding the implementation of the recent dressing room policy enacted by Hockey Canada, several Guidance Group members felt the policy-making and communication process fell short. One Guidance Group participant reflected on the policy development and said the result was that unfortunately, "It does not include tools and resources towards evolving the culture. This policy was not thoughtfully put together..."

2.3.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Hockey Canada can consistently use its Member Branches engagement protocol: Hockey Canada has developed with its Member Branches, a detailed engagement protocol that allows for Member Branches participation and discussion in shaping policies and program initiatives. When the protocol, co-designed with Member Branches is used, it is effective. There is an opportunity for using the protocol more consistently with Members when forming new policy initiatives and ensuring that communication kits are also developed to support Member Branches

in outreach to their respective stakeholders. This ensures a two-way dialogue and responsive policymaking. As one Guidance Group participant observed, “[Member Branches] can be incredibly difficult to get aligned, when we get aligned the power and reach is significant. If [Member Branches] are engaged at the right time, real change can be made.”

2.4. Gaps in coordinated approaches to communication, education, and training to prevent maltreatment in hockey

- Is the UCCMS, to which Hockey Canada is a signatory, widely understood across Hockey Canada’s Member Branches and the hockey ecosystem?
- What is working and what is not working when it comes to coordinating the approach to communication, education, and training to prevent maltreatment across the participant organizations?
- To what extent is the expanded work and new approaches of the Vice President of Sport Safety and Vice President of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion communicated to participants and to the Hockey community?

2.4.1. Guidance Group Responses:

The Guidance Group reported that, in their view, a key question is: How to unify all Hockey Canada Member Branches and minor hockey leagues to move the culture forward together? Guidance Group participants recognized the inherent challenges for Hockey Canada being able to engage effectively with participants in the grassroots level, given Member Branches support 2500 local minor hockey organizations. Guidance Group participants questioned how Hockey Canada can continue to better connect with Member Branches and close the gaps in communication. They asked what can be done to break down silos and indicated an interest in asking Hockey Canada to canvas “what support is needed versus providing direction?”

Guidance Group participants consistently reflected that the fallout of the 2018 scandal related to the sexual assault allegations against five players of the Canadian world junior hockey team significantly undermined trust with Member Branches and community groups. Some spoke about

the work being done to re-build trust with Member Branches and other participants around shared objectives and better communication.

Some Guidance Group participants noted concerns that, as expectations grow and change for minor hockey coaches and program leaders, the group of, primarily, volunteers are tasked with additional tasks that they did not choose and do not have the resources for. However, Guidance Group participants agreed that changes to coach education to include interpersonal and conflict management skills, along with increasing knowledge of maltreatment and how to prevent it, could help alleviate this concern.

When looking at problem behaviours in coaching which result in complaints or alleged violations to Rule 11 or UCCMS, several Guidance Group participants noted that the behaviours come from people coaching in the way they have been coached. Harmful behaviours are normalized and passed down to the next generation; meaningful change requires a shift in culture, norms, and expectations rather than a box-ticking exercise.

One Guidance Group participant shared the findings of a project carried out with players of color in a professional league; each of the players had heard racial slurs and insults from coaches, opponents, parents, fans, and players between the ages of 8-11. Guidance Group participants identified the pressing need for minor hockey teams to address this issue proactively from the lens of prevention, education, and restorative approaches.

2.4.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Possibility to bring systems together through changes to coach education: The Guidance Group noted that, given there are 2500 minor hockey leagues across Canada, there is great value in a well-thought-out strategy regarding how to bridge the disconnect between grassroots and Hockey Canada. Guidance Group participants had a lot of thoughts on how to improve coach education to better connect the approach of hockey leagues across Canada. While there were a

range of views amongst the Guidance Group on how this can best be tackled, there was general agreement that today's minor hockey coach needs a broader skill set beyond the technical skills of the game. One Guidance Group participant said, "I'd like to see coach education in their two-day workshop on interpersonal skills, communicating with parents, the seminars don't teach the conflict resolution skills...there are new aspects to coach education, and if they do not want to learn these skills maybe it's not the right person for coaching in today's minor hockey leagues."

Coach education in future can develop conflict management, interpersonal and safe sport skills, and information: Currently, coach education is led by each Member Branch and educators carry out the coach education, at levels set by Hockey Canada, with steps to follow to become a certified coach at each level. To become certified at each level, a coach invests significant time at coaching certification seminars. Guidance Group participants saw this training as an opportunity for new interpersonal and Safe Sport related skills and information to be disseminated to the grassroots.

Several Guidance Group participants recognized the education progress of the Respect Group's modules, training nearly 2.5 million Canadians to recognize and prevent bullying, abuse, harassment, and discrimination. There are now customized trainings for coaches, referees, officials, and parents. One Guidance Group participant described this training as an entry point to "set the table" for more conversations on preventing maltreatment in sport. However, several Guidance Group participants also noted that they have observed coaches and parents click through the online modules without engaging. It was identified that the material can be integrated into the required coaching seminars with deeper engagement from participants. This can include issues of misogyny, racism, and other maltreatment behaviours covered in the UCCMS.

Guidance Group participants agreed that the coaching certification seminars and materials are world class from a technical hockey skills perspective, but said gaps remain to be filled when it comes to integrating values. It was reported Hockey Canada has taken initial steps to fill these gaps, as it is currently carrying out a review of its education and learning materials and now can

access its own learning management system to disseminate and track new education materials that are launched for coaches and officials. As a Guidance Group participant put it, “It’s a journey, we know we have to make changes, so it’s continuous learning.”

Interactive education for players: Guidance Group participants also spoke about the importance of having engaged and interactive education that focuses on sharing lived experiences to understand how maltreatment can affect people’s lives. Such education makes the subject matter relatable to all. As a Guidance Group participant put it, “when we engage and educate in a fun, interactive and memorable way, we see results.” The Guidance Group participant was skeptical as to the effectiveness of the online education modules favored by hockey associations: “when players are able to ask questions, grow, learn and engage in something that is dynamic and interactive it will have far more impact.” Guidance Group participants were particularly excited about the change that can be fostered by educating young players. As one put it, “The next generation is so open minded and forward looking and will foster and embrace change they have a willingness to evolve language behaviours and attitudes.”

Focused or customized programs for the 10–12 -year -old age group: Several Guidance Group participants observed that the ideal age to reach participants with a healthy approach to culture and safety is between 10-12. This is the age where Guidance Group participants noted that kids can be made to feel safer in their sport experience and be taught tools to help them navigate this for themselves. For example, it was pointed out that many maltreatment complaints that occur in this age group involve behaviours that are not intentional and lend themselves to being corrected through education. Noting the opportunity for skill building in this age cohort, it was reported the Respect Group developed a program called “stay in the game” but have not had uptake, despite the age being ideal to tackle the topics of culture and psychological safety.

Parent education within minor hockey: The Guidance Group indicated a need to raise the standard of conduct for parents in many minor hockey leagues, which routinely feature coaches yelling and parents shouting. A Guidance Group participant noted, “Getting in front of minor hockey associations is one of our most important tasks.” Addressing parents on expectations,

holding them accountable after impressing those standards, and providing a level of training on diffusing conflict, are all methods Guidance Group participants identified to empower parents to take responsibility for the conduct of the team. A Guidance Group participant reflected: “Parents are to feel empowered to stand up and help others re-group, while coaches maintain a certain level of communication and conduct. Agreements on conduct and standards can be posted up in the rink as a reminder to help hold each other accountable.”

Confirming all Hockey Canada leadership and staff have taken training on preventing maltreatment, similar to what is required by minor hockey associations: In the eyes of Guidance Group participants, there is great value in communicating that all Hockey Canada leadership and staff have taken the same training required by those involved with minor hockey, as it demonstrates consistency, and that Hockey Canada values this knowledge. It was reported that Hockey Canada leadership and employees have undertaken this training; therefore, public facing verification of this education would be well-received by the hockey community. Several Guidance Group participants thought this should be mandatory to show Hockey Canada is embracing prevention of maltreatment and is focussed on its culture.

Use team charters as a tool to prevent maltreatment: Several Guidance Group participants spoke about the opportunity for mutual accountability and a change in actions and behaviours that can be achieved through the development of “Team Charters.” It was reported that this was piloted by the Respect Group with the Western Hockey League (“WHL”), some University sport teams, NCAA, and some AAA teams in Calgary. This approach combined foundational education on bullying, abuse, harassment, and discrimination for a team’s age group, with the team creating their own Team Charter. The team uses an exercise to identify its five core values that they will hold each other accountable for, and reminders are sent by a mental health resiliency app tool to remind participants about their Team Charter. Guidance Group participants indicated this process creates the space for communicating about respectful actions and behaviours that teammates use to hold each other accountable.

It was reported the Team Charter process has been seen to be successful, particularly with young people. For example, on one team that had engaged in Team Charter process, there was a sexual misconduct incident related to the team last season, and two players on the team that were not involved in the incident, reported it. They felt empowered as bystanders to step up, because the team had foundational education and a Team Charter. Reporting by peers is rare in hockey because of the fear of ostracization from teammates, fear of reprisal from coaches, and fear of irritating parents who have invested so much. As a Guidance Group participant put it:

A good person may not report, so good people need tools to be better.... The culture change we need is to get to coaches, players [and] the young people [who] are accountable to each other ... to change their behaviour when they get the education.

2.5. Define and operationalize behaviours and actions that contribute to a healthy hockey culture and reduce risk for maltreatment

- Noting that UCCMS outlines all the prohibited behaviour that are code violations, what is Hockey Canada’s role in building off the UCCMS to define, incentivize, and hold community participants accountable to good behaviour?
- To what extent is it useful if Hockey Canada can define and provide examples of maltreatment in the Code (e.g., psychological) specific to the context of hockey, to help bring participants along in understanding and making change?

2.5.1. Guidance Group Responses:

Guidance Group participants identified a perception that there is a disconnect between policy development related to the UCCMS and achieving results on the ground. As one Guidance Group participants put it, “How are we going to deliver great strategies across the country and see some genuine action and results?” Guidance Group participants referred again to coach and player education to translate good ideas into actions and results. As one Guidance Group participant put it:

Minor and junior hockey players hold considerable influence – a gap that is missing with the education that exists is the understanding how certain norms, behaviors

and actions impact people's lives – there is a need to humanize in order to educate – the players don't know (the impact of actions) because they are in an insular bubble.

As this participant saw it, humanizing the experience of maltreatment helps set the stage for greater willingness to make changes that can shape a healthier culture.

Guidance Group participants indicated a view that in order to prevent maltreatment, there needs to be a strengthening of grassroots buy-in, more oversight at local level, more action, more prevention, and less reacting.

Guidance Group participants reported they saw a link between lower incidents of maltreatment and a sport culture that is safe and welcoming to all participants. One Guidance Group participant referenced the work of organizational psychologist, author, and former NBA player, John Amaechi, and shared, ““How big of a piece of litter does someone have to throw in front of you to ask them to throw it in the garbage and not on the street?” The Guidance Group participant reflected on this dynamic in minor hockey culture, “What has a coach done in the team environment where a kid feels safe and protected in yelling egregious slurs with the coach standing right there.” The Guidance Group participant described an alleged on-ice incident of anti-Semitism and, while there is value to addressing the specific incident as well, said it was “crucial to talk about organizational culture - what is accepted and permitted in the sport environment, and not individualize the problem.” A further example of this was shared by another Guidance Group participant when describing a junior team with a notoriously bad culture whose head coaches, general manager and owner were asked to step down after numerous incidents, and subsequently replaced. Yet the problematic culture persists, even under new owners. As the Guidance Group participant put it, “Not creating accountability for kids on the team and what is permissible, how teams manage norms for the conduct of players, vetting the billet families, this all contributes.” If organizational culture is not strong, you are vulnerable to maltreatment and harmful incidents.

Another Guidance Group participant shared experiences related to the interface between the culture of team leadership, and the incidents and prevalence of maltreatment. They reflected:

One team is on my radar all the time... We received multiple complaints of homophobic slurs amongst fans. While players and coaches were very receptive and open to addressing the issue, at the heart of the problem was the business side of the team not following the league's policies; Business operations is where the problem was.

A Guidance Group participant also worked with a team where a player was being alienated based on race, and reflected, "We've noticed a correlation between the culture of leadership and how they want to do business and the prevalence of maltreatment." As the Guidance Group participant put it:

We respond to maltreatment incidents when they happen as an emergency, [but its] like responding to a dumpster fire. We must methodically put it out, or it will light up again. We have to get to the seed of it, in our case a cultural problem with leadership of the team or the association.

2.5.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Improve the screening of hockey association leaders and coaches to match the desired attributes of healthy sport culture: Guidance group participants noted that there should be enhanced screening for individuals selected to key positions, such as boards of directors, national team or development team coaches, that looks at their social media history, their resumes, and non-hockey references to make sure there are no core values that are in conflict with the UCCMS and the culture of well-being and psychological safety that is being sought. This approach was recently implemented by Hockey Canada and could be expanded to other organizations in the hockey ecosystem.

2.6. A coordinated approach to culture change throughout the Hockey Canada eco-system

- How can the existing relationships and participant engagement strategy between Hockey Canada and participant organizations be used to ensure a coordinated approach to culture change throughout the system?
- What is the opportunity for the existing participant engagement strategy to be applied to plan for change in culture together with participants? Can the Action Plan be revisited as a shared approach together with participants?
- How can this be achieved as a follow up to Beyond the Boards Summit (and/or other engagement approaches) that focus on working directly with Member Branches and other participant organizations?

2.6.1. Guidance Group Responses:

Guidance Group participants noted that, currently, responsibility for implementing initiatives and changes appears to sit with governing bodies (Hockey Canada and its Member Branches), however, in their view, responsibility must also sit with coaches, parents, fan culture, officials, media, and all involved. Responsibility for culture change must be shared more broadly with all involved to foster real change. Guidance Group participants reflected it was important to, “Keep it simple and very accessible for ease of access at grassroots level – make it actionable.”

Many Guidance Group participants observed that hockey’s grassroots work is disconnected culturally (coaches and officials) from Hockey Canada and discussed how to engage and involve the grassroots more effectively with the governing body. A Guidance Group participants asked,

How can [Hockey Canada] play a more effective role in supporting the implementation work carried out by each provincial participant organization? Programs and initiatives for safer sport must be simple and accessible at the grassroots level so that we can see action on the ground.

2.6.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Hockey Canada can support learning exchanges and sharing good practices from and across participant organizations: A Guidance Group participant observed that some Member Branches and participant organizations are leading and pushing the envelope on culture change, safety in the game, as well as good governance and earning participants' trust. The Guidance Group participant reflected there would be value in more formalized ways for Hockey Canada to learn what is working well for participant organizations and sharing these learnings with other organizations. An example was shared of a participant organization who increased their transparency and have shifted from an operational board to a guidance board. Guidance Group participants flagged that a concrete way to support initiatives for participant organizations is to provide tool kits for new initiatives for organizations to use to implement those initiatives, and even basic templates that can be filled in, so the development of the templates does not need to be done again, and there is consistency for volunteers on the ground. A Guidance Group participant noted the importance of being mindful of the capacity of Member Branches organizations. They indicated that due to the current lack of common understanding about sport safety and the prevention of maltreatment, it is necessary to "meet Member [Branches] where they are and build from there."

Hockey Canada has improved and can further improve its relationships and communication with Member Branches: Several Guidance Group participants reflected on an improved relationship between Hockey Canada and its 13 Member Branches; "It's a change from five years ago when it was strained and difficult, ten years ago it was impossible." It was reported the addition of four regional directors working within Hockey Canada to better engage with each region has helped. One Guidance Group participant noted that communication with participants has improved and there is also progress made amongst Member Branches working jointly. Guidance Group participants suggested that further improvements can be made in the timing of

communication by Hockey Canada to Member Branches. For example, a Guidance Group participant noted, when it comes to new initiatives, that without clear and well-thought-through communication, confusion emerges on who is responsible for what. One Guidance Group participant reflected on the challenge of getting 13 Member Branches to agree, “[there is] a need for solid change management principles and solid communication, which makes change and progress somewhat slow...This excites me, the opportunity to become quicker and nimbler.”

Clear and consistent signals that hockey welcomes participants from all backgrounds: Guidance Group participants agreed that small steps by hockey organizations can go a long way to signal that hockey welcomes participants from all backgrounds. This is particularly important considering a 63% increase in discriminatory slurs being tracked on the ice in 2022-2023, compared to the prior year, according to Hockey Canada’s 2023 Maltreatment Report.¹ From the perspective of the Guidance Group, it is crucial to make an effort to welcome participants of all backgrounds in order to support widespread grassroots participation. One example provided was that minor hockey leagues can be mindful of religious holidays outside the Christian Calendar when scheduling practice and league play. Guidance Group participants suggested social media is another tool to tell stories that are positive and support an inclusive environment.

Guidance Group participants reported another area to achieve progress at the national level would be to strive for diversity in the staff of teams. One Guidance Group participant reflected:

GMs, business staff, support teams. Currently, there is almost none. Inclusion happens when we have people in those roles. We can diversify the work pool in the support staff and athletic trainers. This greatly diminishes the incidences of racial slurs from mere presence. Diversifying the work force helps address some aspects of bad culture.

Several Guidance Group participants spoke to the problem of patronage in hiring within hockey organizations and how this continues to exclude a more diverse range of professionals and volunteers from leadership positions. In their view, this can contribute to the issue of diversity

¹ <https://cdn.hockeycanada.ca/hockey-canada/Corporate/About/Downloads/2022-23-maltreatment-report-e.pdf>

and inclusion initiatives in hockey organizations being poorly understood and only implemented in a way that is “performative and not substantive.” An example was offered by a Guidance Group participant reflecting this problem in connection with an independent committee convened to audit and gauge the Greater Toronto Hockey League’s (the “GTHL”) status in implementing its own action plan to prevent discrimination. From the perspective of the Guidance Group participant, the *Independent Committee’s Review of Racism and Discrimination in the Greater Toronto Hockey League* found that the recommendations that were implemented to date were the “symbolic and performative” ones rather than substantive or system changes.²

Another example of promoting and fostering an environment that is welcoming, offered by a Guidance Group participant, is the OHL’s “Fan Code of Conduct,” presented via video before referees take to the ice, to outline expectations and boundaries for fans. The OHL also runs awareness nights, including Indigenous Peoples awareness, Black Heritage, International women’s awareness, and pride awareness. Guidance Group participants noted that this runs a risk of being performative but indicated it can be genuine if the team has a direct connection to the people being highlighted; “Making awareness nights more meaningful means including those voices we are trying to celebrate, we need to be intentional about what we are doing.”

Fostering a growth mindset when it comes to culture change: As one Guidance Group participant put it, “It needs to be ok to say, ‘This is how I used to think,’ and it is ok to shift, grow and change your mind. When we make it safe for people to discuss their views and change their minds, we can be open, and the system can change.”

2.7. Understanding and addressing barriers to enacting stronger safety systems and safeguarding behaviors in hockey

- What factors and dynamics are a barrier to improving safety systems, reporting and safeguarding behaviours for Hockey Canada and across its participant organizations?

² <https://d2pr6pnwfmh0za.cloudfront.net/app/uploads/gthl/2022/03/29082933/Independent-Committee-Final-Report.pdf>

- On the flip side, what factors and dynamics can allow for improving safety systems, reporting and safeguarding behaviours?

2.7.1. Guidance Group Responses:

Guidance Group participants reported that in July 2022, Hockey Canada rolled out the ITP (Independent Third Party), as a newly established complaint mechanism as a stop-gap measure to independently administer complaints and maltreatment allegations from all Hockey Canada sanctioned programs and activities; this includes Member Branches and minor hockey associations, while maltreatment allegations for national level programs have been handled by OSIC since October 2022. The concept behind the ITP was to put one consistent complaint handling system in place quickly. The ITP administers a wide range of maltreatment complaints that fall under Hockey Canada's Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy and Code of Conduct. Guidance Group participants indicated the ITP has experienced growing pains in its first years of operations. There were a range of views as to whether it will be more consistent and provide better coherence to UCCMS and sport safety principles to continue with one overarching complaint handling system, rather than distinct provincial complaint mechanisms, in light of each province and territory's public commitment to establishing independent third-party complaint mechanisms by the end of 2023.

Following the first year of the ITP's operation, as part of an effort to improve the new service, Hockey Canada convened a Working Group to discuss and recommend ITP improvements. The Working Group was composed of participants and leadership staff, and individuals who process complaints at the Member and/or local hockey association level. As part of the work to learn from experience and improve the ITP processes, direct lines of communication with Member Branches help to identify and address ITP issues; this is supported by Hockey Canada's Director of Maltreatment. The reflection and learning about the ITP then inform related work, including an ongoing Working Group, the "Discipline and Rehabilitation Working Group." This Working Group is looking at how to better integrate restorative approaches and education as tools to correct maltreatment behaviours, an issue flagged as a gap by several Guidance Group participants. Cases handled by the ITP are reported on in Hockey Canada's annual maltreatment

reports, as well as anonymized data reported more frequently to each Member Branch, to allow branches to monitor the progression of files from their own jurisdictions.

While efforts to improve and learn from the ITP are ongoing, the Guidance Group reflected on a wide range of experiences of hockey participants they had supported in accessing the ITP's services. It was reported by some Guidance Group members that there is an identified need for a policy to address files that fall within the ITP's jurisdiction and meet a threshold for egregious maltreatment and how those should be navigated. Every complaint that arrives with the ITP is triaged, and if it meets certain criteria, it stays within ITP framework; if it does not, it can be redirected to other parties, for national level allegations, to OSIC, and in other cases to the Member Branches themselves. Currently, the ITP is funded solely by Hockey Canada.

Some Guidance Group participants identified the need for education, complaint access, and traffic directing on maltreatment to be simple, easy to access and incorporated more consistently throughout the hockey ecosystem. They reflected on the value of closing any gaps in the current ITP process.

Some Guidance Group participants spoke about problematic experiences they had encountered in supporting youth making complaints to Hockey Canada's ITP and to the GTHL. In particular, several Guidance Group participants cited delays, lack of consistent case management, and lack of understanding about where a particular case is in the ITP's screening or acceptance of a complaint.

Two examples were shared by Guidance Group participants, in which complaints were reported to Hockey Canada's ITP (one related to homophobic messages in a group chat and one related to anti-Semitic slurs on the ice during a tournament) and after months of waiting, no response had been received by parties in early 2024. Several Guidance Group participants spoke to situations where, in their view, procedural issues were not handled well in Hockey Canada's new ITP system. While there may be valid reasons for any ITP procedural determinations, the perception of several Guidance Group participants was that there are improvements to be made.

Guidance Group participants pointed out that even when an investigation is carried out, and a disciplinary measure given, all cases are treated with punitive sanctions of suspensions, rather than using “restorative” or problem-solving approaches. In the view of the Guidance Group participants, this misses an opportunity for education, particularly for the 10–12-year-old age range where maltreatment incidents can be less intentional. Guidance Group participants reflected that resources are missing that would help families. A Guidance Group participant indicated a view that there is a lack of restorative tools available:

There are no tools offered for those who have breached the code with tools to reform. There are no conversations, no education, no reparation, no repair of harm, to try and prevent future maltreatment.

Several Guidance Group participants pointed out that when an investigation is carried out, the process is quite long, and they observed it is often more victimizing than the actual incident. Investigations question a complainant’s integrity, and sanctions only include suspension of games, yet participants can still practise, and can still attend a game from the stands. An individual facing a sanction does not have to take any action to remediate or restore the harm. A Guidance Group participant described a family using the complaint system for alleged racial slurs, and the family dropped the complaint due to the time and energy required to get to a hearing. In the view of this Guidance Group participant, many families they had supported felt similarly, and this also can skew the maltreatment data collected to look lower than what is being experienced by participants.

Another issue identified by Guidance Group participants, that prevents people from making complaints, is a fear of reprisal in the elite feeder leagues. When talking about maltreatment incidences, the majority, according to Guidance Group participants, occurs at competitive levels. Elite players are not going to often complain to complaint mechanisms at the high levels, because “the good players and their parents are so concerned that their careers will be impacted.” Most minor hockey associations have a survey where parents can evaluate the coaching they received during the season, but Guidance Group participants indicated, “AAA league parents won’t even fill it out” for fear of reprisal towards their child and how it might affect future prospects.

Guidance Group participants reflected the coaches have near complete control of the fate of the child's opportunities to advance at the most elite levels, as scouts at the next level contact these coaches to seek out information on advancement.

More than one Guidance Group participant spoke about threats they had personally experienced when supporting athletes who had experienced maltreatment from NHL scouts and others in the elite parts of the hockey ecosystem. They described experiences of allegations of maltreatment being dismissed, and the "person exposing the maltreatment seen as the villain, rather than the structures, associations that allow it to happen."

2.7.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Make restorative and dialogue-based problem-solving spaces available through ITP, Rule 11 violations, and other complaint mechanisms: For example, as described by a Guidance Group participant, the GTHL (one of the largest minor hockey leagues in the world with over 40,000 minor hockey participants) does not have a mediation or restorative problem-solving process prior to investigation through its complaint-receiving process. This Guidance Group participant recognized that some issues with youth lend themselves much more to education than to sanctions in terms of altering future actions and behaviours. As one Guidance Group participant put it: "when it comes to complaints and investigation, it is individualizing a culture problem" and the solution lies in addressing the environment and culture of the team and its organization. This opportunity to focus on restorative approaches for correcting maltreatment behaviour is also recognized by the ITP Working Group. The SEA Team notes that these recent efforts may not yet be implemented or understood broadly in the hockey community.

Many Guidance Group participants reflected on the need to create a space where restorative approaches can be used in hockey settings. One Guidance Group participant shared an example where this work is being carried out, and could be scaled up, where work is happening proactively

across the league and with the officials. A Guidance Group participant said, “When incidents are reported, restorative work with the players is carried out to further engage and give them education and homework, and relate it back to their lives, rather than sanctions being reactive and punitive as laid out in Hockey Canada’s policy.”

Several Guidance Group participants indicated there was a need for a more timely update to be provided to complainants regarding the status of their complaint at various points along the ITP journey. Guidance Group participants suggested, because complaint handling processes are often so long and do not currently offer dialogue-based problem-solving or restorative approaches, there is an increased need for interim actions to help a team navigate an allegation that may take months to address, to ensure physical and psychological safety for participants.

Awareness campaign about ITP and how to use it: According to several Guidance Group participants, most participants in minor hockey and their families do not know about the ITP or complaint mechanisms in their respective leagues. They said this gap created an opportunity for clear, consistent, and accessible messaging about what these mechanisms are and how to use them. Guidance Group participants indicated it is worth exploring how short videos can be used effectively to disseminate this information widely in the hockey community. To note, it was reported Hockey Canada has had previous success in communicating widely about tracking Rule 11 violations through disseminating short videos.

Commitment from Hockey Canada to learn from and to make improvements to the ITP system: It was recognized by Guidance Group participants that Hockey Canada sees the importance of an effective ITP in creating a system that prevents and addresses maltreatment, and it was reported that the current ITP approach will need to be worked on and refined. While Guidance Group participants had differing views on the effectiveness of the current ITP system; they agreed that it is important to have an ITP that works independently, consistently, transparently, and effectively in receiving and managing complaints. As noted above, it was reported that there are ongoing efforts to take stock of where there are challenges and issues with the ITP and continue to refine the processes to better meet objectives of addressing maltreatment. It was reported,

after the first year of ITP operation, the focus was to more effectively triage the complaints to prevent big delays and to achieve greater consistency with investigations, findings, and reports. It was also reported that the ITP Working Group has met regularly to discuss emerging issues and will undertake a full debrief at the end of the 2023-2024 season with a view to continue improving the ITP system. While the ITP system is a significant cost, some Guidance Group participants saw it as more efficient to manage nationally rather than each Member Branch operating their own. According to Guidance Group participants, most Hockey Canada Member Branches and participants see value in having an ITP.

Coach audit process built into to sanctioned minor hockey: Currently, Guidance Group participants indicated, there is no audit process for coaches in sanctioned minor hockey, making it difficult for complaints about coach behaviour in environments where there may not be other adults monitoring the coach's actions and behaviours. A Guidance Group participant suggested that auditors can observe practices to monitor coaches' behaviour of how they interact with youth, allowing for course correction when there is not adherence to the relevant Code of Conduct or UCCMS. Guidance Group participants reported that because parents in "rep" hockey (AA and AAA) often live in fear of reprisal from upsetting coaches with feedback on conduct, there is a need for oversight, and information that does not come from parents. Many minor hockey organizations already have convenors for league play who monitor the referees and timekeepers. As convenors are present and fulfilling their existing roles, there is also a potential to add audit of conduct to this role.

Space for dialogue with hockey association and organization leaders: As a Guidance Group participant put it, "To try and break down lines between gender, race, ethnicity, ability level, [we] need to create a dialogue...the challenge is getting into each team's organization and discussing it. That is [the] challenge."

2.8. Establishing a healthy balance between a focus on performance and a culture of well-being, physical and psychological safety.

- Does a pervasive focus on performance contribute to maltreatment?

- Does a “win at all costs” mentality relate to a situation of absolute power of authority figures?
- When does team bonding and cohesion become linked to toxic masculinity and normalized expectation of harmful behaviours without challenging norms?

2.8.1. Guidance Group Responses:

The Guidance Group identified several influencing factors that complicate achieving a culture of well-being, physical, and psychological safety that need to be addressed in hockey. There was agreement amongst many Guidance Group participants that the issue of toxic masculinity needs to be addressed as it contributes to abuse and maltreatment, in a context where players face enormous pressure to conform to a harmful model of masculinity. Guidance Group participants noted that hockey can be insular, where athletes are isolated from their parents at a young age and where in minor hockey, teams may practice 6-8 times a week and parents are often kept at a distance. As one Guidance Group participant put it:

Coaches are often ex-players who reinforce the culture that has been ingrained into them. It is [one of] the only sports in North America where those pursuing the sport at the highest level are sent away from home to play at age 16 and are immersed with teammates, and individuality is further stamped out.

Another Guidance Group participant noted, “kids are sent away at a young age; the belief is reinforced that all you should focus on is hockey if you want to succeed.”

Guidance Group participants also shared that an obsession with winning causes many minor hockey organizations to overlook maltreatment; those actions and behaviours are permitted for high performers. It was observed that, too often, performance is seen as a priority over good conduct.

2.8.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Do not allow fighting in the game, in particular at professional levels: Guidance Group participants agreed that fighting in elite or professional hockey sets the wrong example; the media can glorify the behavior and it creates a problematic environment that permeates the rest of the sport. As one Guidance Group participant put it:

If I could change one thing in hockey, I would say no more fighting. You do not see brawls in soccer or in Olympic hockey and it's no less enjoyable to watch.... when parents and athletes see [fighting] as necessary to advance in the sport, they are doing themselves a disservice. When parents get excited when a fight breaks out, what does that tell a kid?

Guidance Group participants pointed out that hockey can still be successful without fighting, as demonstrated by the ban on fighting in Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League (QMJHL).

Establish a healthy balance between performance and culture of well-being: The Guidance Group identified the need for new approaches to achieving well-being and celebrating positive culture. Guidance Group participants thought it was important to recognize performance milestones reached, while continuing to strive for a more positive and healthy culture in hockey.

Celebrate individuality: Hockey players need to have and share diverse identities, and these must be welcomed and celebrated in team and organizational settings. Guidance Group participants spoke about the need to foster a culture that will embrace individuality and difference over conformity.

Opportunities for affinity spaces for minor hockey players from equity-deserving backgrounds: Guidance Group participants spoke about the need to provide youth from a range of equity-deserving backgrounds with affinity spaces to counter some of the challenges they face in traditional hockey environments. They explained this can be a powerful tool to build confidence and renew fun and passion for the game of hockey. An example shared by a Guidance Group participant is the Little Native Hockey League's marking its 50th anniversary with 3500 players coming together for a week of community events as, "All Nations, one family." As a Guidance Group participant described:

This environment is amazing in [providing] a safe affinity space to grow confidence and build a community of support that is needed. Similarly, the Black Hockey Summit in July allows kids to feel they belong in the sport of hockey. The sport is a vehicle for building character and being successful rather than the end goal.

Mentorship programs emphasizing the value of character beyond results: A Guidance Group participant described a mentorship program for players of colour, or from equity-deserving backgrounds, that focuses on development of the athlete as a person and their character. The program aims for players to think about themselves and their actions beyond their results and statistics to become players with good character, which also assists in developing a career on and off the ice.

2.9. Information and data management gaps

- What steps are needed to ensure data is collected, complied, and analyzed with an intersectional lens and informs decision-making on operations? How can Hockey Canada make sure diversity is not tokenized and progress narratives are not a focus over widespread change?
- Is there a research or data gathering strategy around collecting relevant maltreatment information in a way that is comparable and consistent over time, year over year, in a robust, statistically reliable way? (for example, the Hockey Canada 2023 Maltreatment Report)
- How are learnings from data then translated to meaningful action?

2.9.1. Guidance Group Responses:

Some Guidance Group participants shared further insights regarding the approaches Hockey Canada is developing to data gathering and maltreatment. For example, there is a plan to look more holistically at the collected data on maltreatment as compared to Hockey Canada's registration data to understand where there are "hot spots" and where attention can be paid to culture.

2.9.2. Guidance Group Related Opportunities:

The following describes the opportunities communicated by the Guidance Group, related to this need:

Work towards consistency in how Member Branches and participant organizations collect maltreatment reports and submit to Hockey Canada: Guidance Group participants flagged that minor hockey organizations do not always follow the same requirements for reporting their data on maltreatment incidents to the Member Branches, who then report to Hockey Canada. There is an opportunity for Hockey Canada to continue its efforts to strengthen and communicate a uniform and consistent approach to these across the participant organizations for more accurate reporting. These consistent guidelines are being implemented for how Rule 11 violations are entered online as they occur, which allow for the incidents to be tracked and acted upon accordingly. It was reported Hockey Canada is currently working with university data management experts to collect accurate data on maltreatment incidents and communicate the approach and rationale for it to Member Branches and participants. This includes analyzing the data collected from OSIC, ITP and Rule 11 violations, and then reporting this publicly in annual maltreatment reports. The goal of this work is that future interventions to improve well-being and sport safety can be informed by data, including prevention, education, and restorative efforts.

Implementing Hockey Canada's new approach for evidence-based decision-making: Some Guidance Group participants reported that when the ITP cases or Rule 11 violation data are examined, there are trends in where there are clusters of incidents, which can be cross referenced with Hockey Canada's registration data. This provides the opportunity for a targeted approach to education and prevention of maltreatment where it is most needed, which can be customized to the key issues. For example, being informed about at what age, in what gender, what type of education or programs are needed to address issues. This will better allow for making conscious and well-informed decisions for strategies moving forward, rather than plans made using anecdotal information.

2.10. Collaborative Process: Capturing Guidance Group responses

As part of the collaborative process that underpins the SEA, Guidance Group participants were provided an opportunity to review a technical draft of this Phase One Assessment Report. Specifically, the Guidance Group was asked review Section 2.0 of the Phase One Assessment Report, which summarizes what we heard from the Guidance Group, mapped onto the 9 Needs identified in the Document Review. Guidance Group members were asked to advise if there is anything in their view that was missing or misinterpreted, as well as sharing if there was an update or new development on a particular topic or example.

While most Guidance Group participants who responded were satisfied with how their perceptions were framed alongside the 9 Needs identified from the Document Review, some issues were raised by Guidance Group participants during their review. Where omissions or errors were pointed out, these items were revised while the SEA team finalized this Phase One Assessment Report.

As outlined in Section 1.0, the purpose of Phase One of the SEA was to look at relevant information, including literature and policies, and consider a range of perceptions that exist on the state of culture and maltreatment in hockey in Canada, by engaging with the Guidance Group, a small group of hockey-knowledgeable thought leaders. This was intended to determine the key queries to make and the methodology and engagement plan for Phase Two of the SEA, to enable a rigorous and credible pathway towards conclusions and recommendations. Section 2.0 of this Phase One Assessment Report is based on Guidance Group participants' perceptions as well as literature and policies, and do not constitute evidentiary findings.

Given the range of experiences and perspectives that Guidance Group participants offered, they did not always agree on particular issues or their interpretation. On topics in the Phase One Assessment Report where a Guidance Group participant did not agree with a perception summarized in Section 2.0 or suggested that something additional be considered when embarking on Phase Two of the SEA, the SEA team believes it is important to share those dissenting views. These views, shared by Guidance Group participants, are as follows:

Some Guidance Group participants flagged the example provided in Section 2.1.1 describing scenarios where a minor hockey association has an issue it wants to bring to Hockey Canada and must first channel the request through the Member Branch. Some Guidance Group participants noted that this is a perception and not a requirement. In the view of these Guidance Group participants, a minor hockey association is empowered to go directly to Hockey Canada to address an issue should it choose to, though it is seen as optimal if the minor hockey association goes through their Member Branch first.

- One Guidance Group participant expressed a view that the interest in hockey leadership to shape a better culture and build public trust, highlighted in Section 2.1, does not go far enough. This Guidance Group participant reflected on the necessity of a fundamental shift in how hockey is administered nationally, provincially, and locally in order to deal with systemic issues, rather than just responding to the symptoms.
- Some Guidance Group participants noted the need for greater clarity in Phase Two as to whether the OSIC mandate is intended to look at Hockey Canada National programming and the mechanisms in place to deal with maltreatment issues or if the intention is to dig into the Hockey Canada structure and how it operates with the members, or both. This was flagged as not clear in the Phase One Assessment Report.
- A Guidance Group participant noted that two helpful pieces of literature were not included in the Document Review and could be reviewed as the SEA moves into Phase Two: Carleton University's January 2023 Research note – *Hockey in Canadian Provinces and Territories*, which gives a useful summary of Hockey Canada's governance structure, as well as the *Canadian Sport Governance Code*, given that all NSOs are mandated to follow it, while Provincial/Territorial Sport Organizations are not. Further, one Guidance Group participant suggested including in the Document Review: *Skating on Thin Ice: Professional Hockey, Rape Culture, & Violence Against Women* (published in 2023 by DeKeseredy, Cowman & Schwartz).
- A concern was raised by a Guidance Group participant, that while the 9 Needs resonated as accurate, tackling them all will reduce the likelihood of success in key areas. Their

suggestion was to consider further distilling and prioritizing the issues to be explored and further addressed in Phase Two.

- In Section 2.2, some Guidance Group participants questioned the extent to which Hockey Canada is disconnected from its grassroots members. To better understand the focussed initiatives that Hockey Canada currently carries out, please refer to Appendix A *Hockey Canada list of ongoing initiatives related to UCCMS*.
- In Section 2.3 related to policy gaps, there were a wide range of views from Guidance Group participants in regards to Hockey Canada's new dressing room policy. The view of some Guidance Group participants is that there was indeed robust engagement (including LGBTQ community engagement) and implementation planning, that went into the development of the policy. For example, it was reported external expert involvement and feedback was integrated and groups including "You Can Play" supported the policy work. Some Guidance Group participants reported that the rationale for the policy was to provide standards and guidelines necessary to ensure the safe, inclusive, and equitable participation of all. In conjunction with the policy, Hockey Canada provided a FAQ and implementation guide that functions as a practical resource.
- In Section 2.4 related to gaps in communication, some Guidance Group participants had differing views regarding the loss of trust of the membership towards Hockey Canada that were highlighted in Section 2.4. Some took the perspective that, following work done between Member Branches and Hockey Canada's Interim Board in 2023, the relationship was strengthened and currently is in a good state.
- Related to Section 2.5, a Guidance Group participant reiterated that individuals directly affiliated with Hockey Canada (including National Team participants) undergo an extensive screening process, using a series of screening tools which may include: Enhanced Police Information Check, Local Police Indices Check, National Criminal Record Check, Vulnerable Sector check, a driver's abstract, an international criminal record search, screening and disclosure forms and social media searches and reference checks.
- In connection with Section 2.7, a Guidance Group participant reported that the desired outcome of Hockey Canada's ITP was to help reduce serious risk, support Member

Branches, and provide a consistent nation-wide mechanism. The ITP also became an important tool to track and collect data on maltreatment complaints and better understand the most prevalent types of incidents and involved parties. It was reported the ITP administers complaints in connection with: sexual abuse, sexual mistreatment, distribution of child pornography, physical assault, repeated instances of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, other forms of severe maltreatment as determined by the ITP, and historical severe maltreatment complaints. It was noted that the ITP is operated by experienced professionals, who are independent from Hockey Canada, the Member Branches and free from conflict with the parties and the ITP does not manage files involving the Canadian Hockey League or Hockey Quebec as they have their own complaint management mechanisms.

- A Guidance Group participant pointed out that when it comes to Hockey Canada's decision to implement the Cromwell Report's 2022 recommendations on by-laws and governance changes, authority to change by-laws comes from the 13 Member Branches, as one of their four responsibilities: Approve changes to the by-laws, alongside approving regulations and playing rules, electing the Board, communicating through the Member Forum, and appointment of the Auditor. The Cromwell Report's recommendations are accepted only when the Member Branches agree (by majority), which is not fully captured in the relevant section of the Phase One Assessment Report. Currently, there are only two outstanding Cromwell items: Board Athlete Representation and Member voting, which were planned to be on the agenda of the 2024 spring Member Branch congress.
- Guidance Group participants raised the interest that all regions across Canada would have the opportunity to be included in Phase Two of the SEA.

3. Looking Ahead

As noted at the outset of this Phase One Assessment Report, the stated goals of Phase One of the SEA were to review and understand the materials available and the relevant stakeholders participating in the hockey ecosystem, to inform the understanding of the questions to be asked in the SEA, and to determine to whom the questions should be asked. Throughout the Document

Review and the engagement with the Guidance Group, the SEA has uncovered many thoughtful opportunities for positive change which may ultimately result in recommendations. It will, however, be the task of Phase Two of the SEA to determine recommendations, including which needs must be addressed, how and in which priority order. Therefore, the recommendations below set out the plan for the next steps of the SEA and related process choices (as discussed in the Phase Two Plan).

3.1. Guidance Group feedback and opportunities

Guidance Group participants agreed that this is a moment for change and there is an opportunity to improve sport broadly in Canada by changing hockey. As one Guidance Group participant noted, “If we can get it right and move forward, we can move the needle forward for sport in general, because of hockey’s reach and influence in the country.” As another Guidance Group participant put it, “There isn’t a guidebook or manual on how to work through these culture issues in the sport, people do nothing because they don’t know what to do. The best thing is teaching people how to think critically, in society, in the sport, in cultures that massively conform.” Another Guidance Group participant reflected, “This group is getting a bunch of minds that don’t agree but are passionate about evolving the culture.” A Guidance Group participant also cited the need to create a vehicle to make change, “We want to address a systemic culture, and this conversation creates hope we can collectively do that.”

3.1.1. Composition of Guidance Group

During the Guidance Group workshop and interviews, Guidance Group participants were asked about the composition of the Guidance Group as the SEA moved forward and who should be invited, in their view, to support effective representation and ensure a diversity of voices and views. Guidance Group participants indicated an interest in seeing the Guidance Group include grassroots representation, which may include administrators or leadership of minor hockey associations, athletes, para-athletes or former athletes and para-athletes, transgender, non-binary representation, and representation from marginalized communities. Further, there is an

interest to have Hockey Canada's senior leadership participation including representation by a Board member.

3.1.2. Phase Two Communities of Engagement

Throughout the Guidance Group discussions and feedback, numerous and diverse populations of hockey participants were referenced. As expected, it was reported that many of these communities have different experiences, interests, needs, and expectations in connection with their relationship to hockey. Throughout Phase One, the SEA Team has taken note of the diverse spectrum of possible participants to engage during Phase Two, and specifically canvassed this question with the Guidance Group. The Guidance Group reported possible stakeholder groups to engage, who they viewed as essential to the SEA including: media that has been involved in telling the stories of and exposing abuse; athletes and former athletes from every background and level; coaches and administrators from different backgrounds and levels (including grassroots to competitive and elite); officials; player agents and scouts; other non-hockey sport organizations who have experience fostering change in their own sport; religious entities; new Canadians; and mental health experts and coaches.

3.2. Summary of Phase Two Engagement Plan

As noted throughout this Phase One Assessment Report, the activities conducted in the SEA to date have been with the interest to understand and plan for the Phase Two engagement work of the SEA. Drawing on the Document Review, Guidance Group feedback and the opportunities summarized here, the SEA Team has greater clarity about which participants should be engaged, what questions to ask, and how to engage participants.

The purpose of Phase Two will be to engage with participants of the hockey ecosystem, to create opportunities for participants to share experiences and recommendations to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport experience. As noted by the Guidance Group, there is no manual to guide the hockey community in how to make the cultural changes required for the sport, and it is the intention of the SEA Team for Phase Two to help provide some guidance. Given the vast scale of the hockey population in Canada, as well as the available budget, time, and resources,

balance will be necessary. For this reason, Phase Two will prioritize broad representation and the use of assessment tools familiar with the sport ecosystem that will clarify the questions/problems and pathways forward to fostering a culture of well-being in hockey.

The Phase Two Plan, recommends five phases of engagement which include:

1. an assessment of culture from the perspectives within Hockey Canada and its Member Branches across Canada;
2. an assessment of culture from the perspectives of grassroots hockey constituents and youth;
3. in-depth semi-structured interviews with grassroots hockey constituents, youth, and stakeholders;
4. three workshops with previously engaged participants to review and provide confirmation of what was heard and observed;
5. followed by a final collaborative workshop with the Guidance Group to learn about the above research and then to define considerations that will inform the final SEA report.

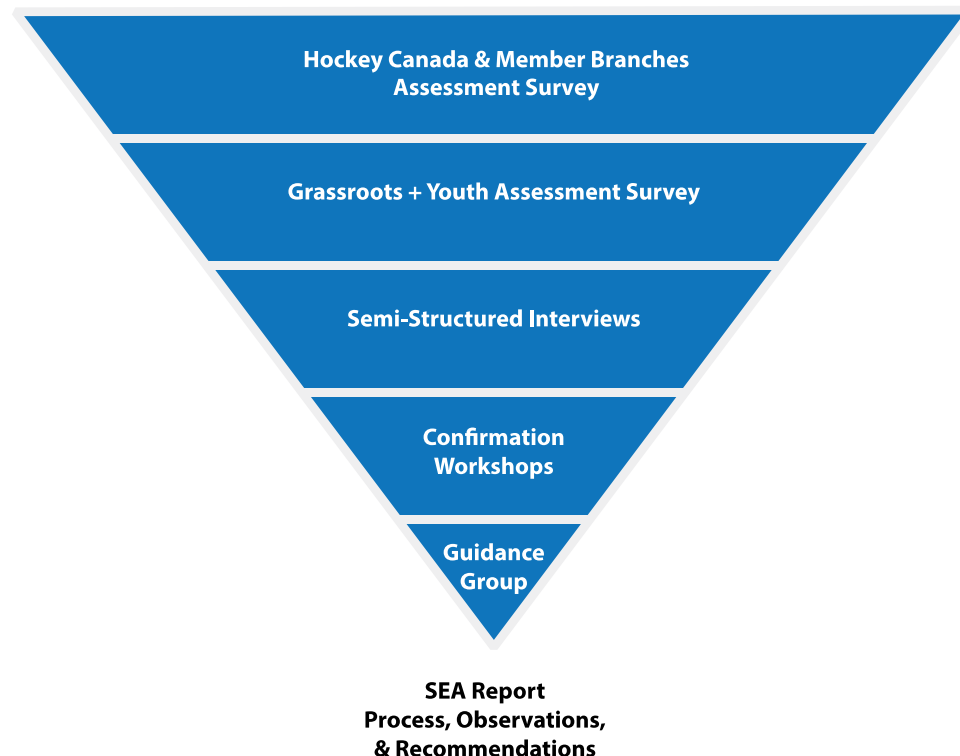


Figure 3 Summary of Phase Two Engagement Stages

4. Conclusion

Given the passion and interest shared by the Guidance Group to date, there is an opportunity to harness this energy in the SEA and shift the conversation toward the role we as Canadians, all can play in preventing maltreatment in hockey and sport more broadly and improve the sport environment in hockey for both current and future participants.

As noted, this Phase One Assessment Report is being shared with the Guidance Group and Hockey Canada for their feedback and to communicate the plan for Phase Two. As the Phase Two Plan has now been approved by OSIC, it is recommended that it will be included as **Appendix B** to this Phase One Assessment Report and published together by OSIC to communicate to the broader community about the SEA and to encourage participation in future phases of work.

5. Appendices

- A. *Hockey Canada list of ongoing initiatives related to the UCCMS;*
- B. *Phase Two Plan*

APPENDIX A – Hockey Canada list of ongoing initiatives related to the UCCMS

1. National Level Protocols:
 1. UCCMS, Code of Conduct, and behavioural expectation presentations are delivered to all Hockey Canada National Teams;
 2. Implementation of the [Adoption of the UCCMS Policy](#) and the requirement that all National Team players, team support personnel, Hockey Canada staff, volunteers and Board Members sign off on the UCCMS and additional behavioural expectation policies;
 3. Sexual assault & consent education training program for all National Team players, team support personnel and Hockey Canada staff;
 4. Coaching Association of Canada Safe Sport Training for all National Team players, team support personnel, Hockey Canada staff and Board Members;
 5. Implementation of enhanced screening processes for National Team players, team support personnel, Hockey Canada staff and Board Members, including the completion of screening disclosure forms, local, national and international (when relevant) criminal record checks, vulnerable sector checks (when appropriate), and social media screening;
 6. National Teams (where applicable) adhere to the Canadian Anti-Doping Program (CADP) and anti-doping education requirements of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport.
2. In June 2021, Hockey Canada and its 13 [Member Branches] unanimously approved the adoption of Section 11 – Maltreatment in the Hockey Canada Rulebook. Section 11 of the Hockey Canada Rule Book includes five rules (11.1 – 11.5) which are in place to address on-ice incidences of maltreatment during Hockey Canada-sanctioned programming. To assist stakeholders in understanding these rules public access to the [Hockey Canada Rule Book](#) (specifically pages 133-138) is available, and a [video](#) has also been created. As a first step towards understanding maltreatment in its sanctioned programming, Hockey Canada and its [Member Branches] tracked and reported all incidents of verbal taunts, insults or intimidation based on discriminatory grounds (Rule 11.4) which occurred during the 2021-22 season and published this information in a [Discrimination Report in December 2022](#).
3. In July 2022, Hockey Canada launched an Independent Third-Party (ITP) Complaint Management mechanism where complaints involving maltreatment allegations within a [Member Branch]'s sanctioned programs are directed to a confidential reporting mechanism. Hockey Canada receives anonymized reports from the ITP documenting the number of complaints received, and reporting on other metrics such as complaint type, complaint jurisdiction and the timing of complaints received throughout the hockey season. More information about the ITP is available at sportcomplaints.ca.
4. In July 2022, Hockey Canada released an [action plan](#) outlining the steps needed to address systemic issues in hockey and ensure greater safety and inclusiveness.
5. On Oct. 27, 2022, Hockey Canada became a signatory to Abuse-Free Sport, the independent organization in place to prevent and address maltreatment in sport in

Canada. All complaints of maltreatment at the national level go directly to the Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) within Abuse-Free Sport. As a signatory of Abuse-Free Sport, Hockey Canada completed all consent management processes, administered all required Abuse-Free Sport accreditation education programs (including the Coaching Association of Canada's Safe Sport Training) and participated in all Abuse-Free Sport required complaint management processes.

6. Hockey Canada has committed to publicly releasing on an annual basis anonymized data relating to the prevalence of maltreatment within Hockey Canada-sanctioned programs. Any emerging findings from the review of the data collected is incorporated into the organization's strategy and will inform the next steps for addressing maltreatment. For the 2022-23 season, Hockey Canada launched a second and expanded report on maltreatment incidences "[Tracking Maltreatment In Sanctioned Hockey Report](#)". This expanded report included complaint data from Abuse-Free Sport / OSIC, on-ice incidences of maltreatment and the [Independent Third Party](#).
7. Education around maltreatment at the community level is mandatory and continues to be delivered through the Respect in Sport Activity Leader program for volunteers across the country. The Respect in Sport Parent Program is also mandatory within certain Hockey Canada Members.
8. Distribution of sport safety education and resource list is made available to Hockey Canada Members and to Independent Third Party personnel for reference when addressing specific outcomes of complaint management processes.
9. Implementation of a [National Gender Identity / Gender Expression Policy](#). In support of this Policy additional assets are publicly available including a [FAQ](#) and a [Resource Guide](#).
10. Hockey Canada facilitated and provided access to third party training on the [Gender Identity / Gender Expression Policy](#) for all Hockey Canada Members and their Minor Hockey Associations.
11. Implementation of a [National Dressing Room Policy](#) for minor hockey (working to improve safety in dressing rooms). With this Policy additional assets are publicly available including a [FAQ document](#), and an [Implementation Guide](#).
12. Publication of [Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Path Forward](#) which includes a Commitment to Action statement that summarizes the organization's ongoing work to drive long-term, sustainable change within the hockey ecosystem in Canada.
13. All above linked resources and information is available in English and French.

APPENDIX B – Sport Environment Assessment Phase Two Plan

Prepared February 16, 2024

OSIC SEA PHASE TWO PLAN: HOCKEY CANADA AND HOCKEY IN CANADA CASE NO.: 2022-12-0068

GOALS:

- A. Identify the nature and scope of systemic issues related to the UCCMS in Canadian ice hockey;
- B. Identify the contributing factors and risk factors leading to the prevalence of any such issues;
- C. Identify sustainable solutions to eliminate and prevent future occurrences of maltreatment and/or prohibited behaviours to cultivate a more safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport experience for those who participate in hockey in Canada; and
- D. Share implementation approach/tool that will equip Hockey Canada to make progress towards a more safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport experience and position the organization to track its progress over time and course correct where needed.

PHASE ONE: SCOPING

The work in this phase is complete, and the *Phase One Assessment Report* will be published in Summer 2024.

PHASE TWO: ENGAGEMENT PLANNING

The purpose of Phase Two is to engage with participants and members of the hockey ecosystem to create opportunities for participants to share experiences and recommendations to create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive sport experience. Given the vast scale of this population in Canada, as well as the available budget, time, and resources, balance is necessary. For this reason, Phase Two will prioritize broad representation and the use of assessment tools familiar with the sport ecosystem that will clarify the questions/problems and pathways forward to fostering a culture of well-being in hockey.

During Phase One (current), the SEA team will prepare for Phase Two by developing:

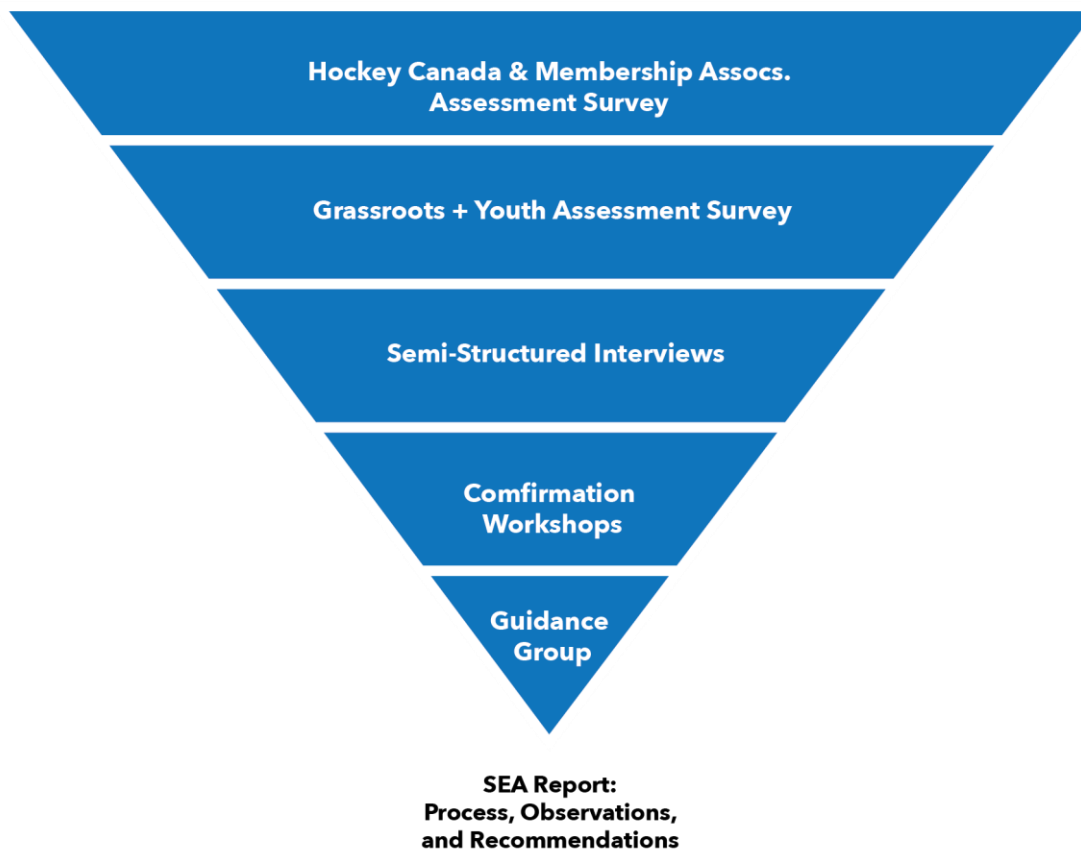
- i. a detailed **engagement work plan within the scope of the approved budget and resources** that will define the core objectives of the Phase Two engagement process. It will define:
 - 1. the engagement actions and processes that will be developed and implemented;
 - 2. scheduling and sequencing of actions/milestones;

3. participant outreach communications planning; and
 4. SEA project resource requirements/allocations.
- ii. a clear SEA **project charter** that will serve as a touchstone to keep the SEA focused, which will be comprised of:
 1. a representation model that aligns the SEA's goal, scale/scope, and resources with what constituents and communities should be engaged for an effective and defensible outcome;
 2. definitions of the core inquiries of the engagement process (aligned with the SEA's goal) and how they will be used and by whom;
 3. a strengths/weaknesses and opportunities/threats review of the plan related to the defensibility of the work in Phase Two — as the foundation of evidence for future recommendations;
 4. clarification of data-collection framework and data collection and retention policies; and
 5. SEA team, any service providers, OSIC, and Hockey Canada accountabilities to the engagement process.
 - iii. a **communications/outreach plan** and materials with Hockey Canada and OSIC to support the recruitment/initiation of hockey community constituents into the engagement process. The plan and materials will include:
 1. a communication/outreach schedule;
 2. best use recommendations for communications/outreach;
 3. clear, accessible, and welcoming sample of outbound messages that will define the project, the purpose, and ways constituents can become involved;
 4. a frequently asked questions memo to triage possible queries inbound to Hockey Canada and OSIC from constituents about the SEA process; and
 5. clear and accessible information about privacy and data protections for possible process participants.

Deliverables: *Work Plan; SEA Project Charter; and Communications Plan and Materials.*

PHASE TWO: ENGAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION

The SEA proposes five engagement research levels to support the final SEA report. These include: an assessment of culture from the perspectives of grassroots hockey constituents and youth; an assessment of culture from the perspectives within Hockey Canada and its Member Branches which are provincial, regional or territorial associations across Canada in-depth semi-structured interviews with grassroots hockey constituents, youth, and stakeholders; three workshops with previously engaged participants to review and provide confirmation of *what was heard and observed*; followed by a final collaborative workshop with the guidance group to learn about the above research and then to define considerations that will inform the final SEA report. Recruitment of participants will be reliant on the support of Hockey Canada and its Members.



#1a Hockey Canada and Membership Assessment Survey

The SEA team will use the SEA Discussion Document and feedback from the Guidance Group during Phase One to develop a stakeholder survey focused on identifying issues, root causes, and risk factors within the hockey community as observed or experienced by corporate and governance constituents of Hockey Canada, and its 13 Member Branches in jurisdictions across Canada. The 13 provincial and territorial Member Branches oversee thousands of minor hockey associations across the country and represent the perspectives and experiences of participants at the grassroots level where maltreatment is likely to be experienced and reported.

The SEA team proposes to commission [InnerLogic](#), a research firm with roots in the Canadian sports sector, which developed the CAAT (Culture of Excellence Assessment and Audit Tool) for Own the Podium and many other NSOs. InnerLogic's survey tool uses cutting-edge technology and a research framework focused on assessing the organizational culture of sports organizations.

One of the advantages offered by InnerLogic's organizational culture assessment tool is that it has been successfully used by Alpine Canada and Basketball Canada. As McLaren Global Sport Solutions noted in their independent review of Gymnastics in Canada, "All NSOs in Canada are encouraged to adopt the CAAT as a common, systemic evaluation tool that will allow a comparison of cultures between NSOs."

McLaren also noted in his Gymnastics review that because NSOs have little impact on day-to-day operations of clubs, provincial/territorial organizations play a larger role in clubs' standards, the policies implemented, and the culture. Drawing parallels to hockey, the SEA team proposes to conduct a thorough engagement of Hockey Canada and its Member Branches to understand the aspects of their cultures possibly contributing to, or preventing, maltreatment.

Hockey Canada and Membership Assessment Survey Process:

- i. Work with InnerLogic to integrate information documented from Phase One into their cultural assessment tool.
- ii. Develop an outreach and recruitment plan targeting 600 participants from Hockey Canada and its Member Branches. Participants will be invited (by email) to participate by the SEA team with the aid of Hockey Canada. The SEA team will aim to collaborate with Hockey Canada to clearly communicate the goals and timeline for this work to the member organizations.
- iii. InnerLogic will field the survey tool, and the SEA team will work with Hockey Canada to manage the communications and outreach process to elicit a strong response from all invited organizations.
- iv. The results and data collected by InnerLogic will be accessed through their proprietary analysis tool by the SEA team. This data will be used to inform the semi-structured interviews and the final SEA report. InnerLogic will develop recommended options for the long-term use of the tool with the Hockey Canada NSO community to better track future trends and progress.

Participants will be asked if they are interested in participating in further engagement research within the scope of this SEA — namely semi-structured interviews and/or workshops.

Deliverable: *Survey data in a structured slide deck report format and recommendations for future and/or long-term use of the tool.*

#1b: Grassroots / Youth Assessment Survey

Again, the SEA project team will commission InnerLogic to refine the Hockey Canada and membership stakeholder survey tool (#1a) for grassroots participants in jurisdictions across Canada. The SEA team will use the SEA Discussion Document and feedback from the Guidance Group in Phase One, to inform the survey design. Recruitment of survey participants would rely on working with Hockey Canada and the 13 Member Branches to introduce the survey to their membership and invite and encourage them to participate.

Like the organizational culture tool (#1a above), this survey is developed by organizational psychologists building on the competing values framework theory (Cameron). This will allow the SEA team to identify the aspects of hockey culture that are creating conditions which may lead to risks leading to maltreatment, and on the other side, identify factors and conditions which contribute to a culture of well-being for participants.

The survey would be disseminated through a concerted outreach and communications campaign co-developed with Hockey Canada to its Member Branches. The aim of this campaign and the survey is to engage with a broadly representative group of 1,000 grassroots Canadians from an array of stakeholder

groups that participate in the sport of hockey.

In addition to surveying a broad cross-section of Canadians, the SEA team will work with InnerLogic to deploy a modified version of the assessment survey designed for 1,000 participants at the grassroots level which can include youth. This tool has been recently and successfully field tested. InnerLogic and the SEA team will develop a specific framework for engaging with youth on this project considering data privacy, parental support, and age restrictions.

Recruiting grassroots members for both survey tools will require Hockey Canada and the Member Branches firm support to ensure a successful and generally representative response rate. This would include hosting SEA-provided content on Member Branch websites, sending initial standalone email invitations and reminders, and including information about the surveys in Member Branch newsletters and updates. This will require close collaboration and coordination between the SEA team and Hockey Canada — particularly their staff that works with the Member Branches.

The SEA project team will work with InnerLogic to analyze and deliver the survey observations through an in-depth slide deck. A major advantage of this approach is that responses from stakeholders (#1a) and the grassroots participants (#1b) can be compared, aiding the discovery process.

The survey aims to document and affirm any issues, root causes, and risk factors identified by the Guidance Group, other stakeholders, and other research; and seek to define broader grassroots and minor hockey considerations that will inform SEA recommendations.

Grassroots + Youth Assessment Survey Process:

- i. The SEA team will work with InnerLogic to customize as needed their field-tested youth and grassroots survey tools.
- ii. The SEA team will develop an outreach and recruitment plan targeting 1,000 participants across Canada to identify the conditions that foster healthy sport culture and identify conditions that increase the risk of maltreatment. Participants will be recruited to participate by the SEA team with the aid of Hockey Canada and its 13 Member Branches.
- iii. InnerLogic will field the survey tool, and the SEA team will work with Hockey Canada to manage the communications and outreach process to elicit a strong response.
- iv. The SEA team will access the results and data collected by InnerLogic through their proprietary analysis tool. This data will inform the semi-structured interviews and the final SEA report. InnerLogic will develop recommended options for the long-term use of the tool with the Hockey Canada NSO community to track future trends and progress. The survey observations will be delivered through an in-depth slide deck.

Participants will be asked if they are interested in participating in further engagement research within the scope of this SEA — namely semi-structured interviews and/or focus groups.

Deliverable: Survey data in a structured slide deck report format and recommendations for long-term use of the tool.

#2: Semi-Structured Interviews

Uncovering the roots and complexities of maltreatment within the hockey ecosystem and understanding the factors that contribute to a healthy sports culture that prevents maltreatment in Canada is a challenging task. Research tools like surveys can uncover broad issues and trends, but personal, conversational interviews offer distinct advantages. Interviews enable the SEA to engage with participants who may wish to share sensitive or nuanced matters, in a confidential and trauma-informed manner. Moreover, interviews are accessible to a wider range of individuals who may be more comfortable in an interview setting.

Considering these advantages, the SEA team proposes conducting semi-structured follow-up interviews. Participants will be sourced from the Hockey Canada and Membership Assessment Survey; the Grassroots Survey; expressions of interest received by OSIC, Hockey Canada, and the Guidance Group; and general canvassing within the hockey ecosystem with the aim of hearing from a broadly representative group of participants.

Interview Process:

- i. Develop an interview research methodology using information gathered from previous research, the Guidance Group and, importantly, the two survey processes. The methodology will:
 - detail a recruitment plan that aligns with the representation model — ensuring that those participants interviewed effectively represent the goals of the engagement process; and
 - outline approaches for analysis and general parameters for a report.
- ii. Develop guidelines to ensure a trauma-informed process for working with minors and other vulnerable people so they feel safe, respected, and comfortable during the interview process. Develop a protocol for triaging issues related to the safety of minors and any specific allegations of potential UCCMS violations identified during an interview, and communicate necessary information to those parties should they wish to report.
- iii. Develop an interview guide to support semi-structured (conversational) interviews by the SEA team members. The guide will define larger queries and questions used by the interviewer to uncover, understand, and document issues, root causes, and risk factors and better understand the factors that contribute to a healthy sport culture that prevents maltreatment in the hockey ecosystem.
- iv. Develop and implement an interviewee recruitment plan with the aim of interviewing approximately 50 to 60 people. Interviewee recruitment efforts will be paired with Hockey Canada's survey communications as mentioned above, with contacts provided by the Guidance Group, and via expressions of interest to OSIC or Hockey Canada.
- v. Videoconference or phone interviews will be performed by SEA team members using the interview guide. Interviews will predominantly be conducted one-on-one. Provisions will be made for small group interviews of no more than three to four people — for stakeholders, team members, or parents/guardians and children. Interviews will be recorded and later transcribed, with the direct acknowledgement and consent of the interviewee(s). Provisions will be made for those uncomfortable with audio recording. All interviews will be conducted anonymously but will be referred to in the report using general demographic or other relevant research categories. In

addition, paraphrased quotes will be used in the final report to better convey what was heard.

- vi. Interview transcripts will be tagged and thematically analyzed — along the general research categories. The aim will be to identify shared issues related to cultural issues that impact maltreatment, which could be addressed through the SEA recommendations.

Deliverable: *Interview data and thematic analysis that will inform the SEA report.*

#3 Three Regional Review and Confirmation Workshops

It is important to have a process in which participants reflect on and review what was heard and observed to affirm the fidelity of the information collected. Given the vast array of individuals and modes of engagement participation, it will not be feasible to loop back with each individual participant. Instead, the SEA team proposes to host three workshops and invite participants, particularly those interviewed, to participate.

The workshops will include a presentation of *what was heard and observed* and a reflection discussion. The aim will be to broadly demonstrate that participants were heard and that their experiences were documented appropriately.

Confirmation Process:

- i. Develop a program centred on a report back (what was heard during the engagement process) for review and feedback by previous engagement participants. The program would allow learning via a presentation and comment via facilitated activities.
- ii. Reconvene three small groups of six to eight former participants (from surveys and interviews). Two online workshop timeslots would be available to cater to participants in Western and Eastern time zones, and a third online timeslot would be made available for francophone participants.
- iii. A SEA team member would lead each workshop. Delegates from the Guidance Group will be invited to attend as observers.

Deliverable: *Concise overview slide deck to be used in three workshops to include data from survey tools and interview data.*

#4 Interim Report + Guidance Group Workshop

It is important to engage with the Guidance Group to allow for reflection and review of *what was heard and observed* — to validate and/or deliberate on their observations and experiences and to begin socializing possible considerations for formal recommendations from the SEA project team.

Depending on scheduling, the SEA team will host a special two- to three-session workshop with Guidance Group members throughout the Phase Two Engagement Phase. Broadly, a quarter of the workshop time will focus on ingesting, learning, and discussing *what was heard and observed*. The remainder of the time will focus on developing considerations that could inform the final SEA recommendations and report.

Interim Report Process:

- i. Cross-review the information documented from the Guidance Group, other research, grassroots and stakeholder surveys, and semi-structured interviews. Identify executive (strongly linked) themes and systemic issues identified throughout the engagement research.
- ii. Develop an interim report (slide deck) to present an overview of the engagement processes, the information documented, *what was heard and observed*, and the next steps. OSIC, Hockey Canada, and the Guidance Group will be the key audiences for this report.

Guidance Group Workshop Process:

- i. Develop workshop activities for Guidance Group members to aid in ingesting the engagement information, prioritizing issues heard/observed, and developing clear considerations for the SEA project team.
- ii. Design and host two to three Guidance Group workshops to learn about *what was heard and observed*, deliberate on issues and priorities, and develop considerations that could *inform* SEA final recommendations documented in the final SEA report. *It will be clearly noted to Guidance Group members that the final recommendations, as defined in the final SEA report, will be at the discretion of the SEA team.*

Deliverable: Overview report in presentation format to be used in Guidance Group workshops.

#5 Final SEA Report

The final SEA report will document three things: the SEA process (part a); an overview and consolidation of key observations through research and engagement (part b); and recommendations (part c).

The final SEA report will focus on systemic or other issues identified related to maltreatment and recommendations to address those issues. The aim would be to develop defensible recommendations supported by thoughtful research and engagement that will improve the experience for current and future hockey participants.

Final SEA Report Process:

- i. Draft an annotated table of contents for review by OSIC to ensure the SEA report meets expectations.
- ii. The final SEA report will include:
 - an outline of the SEA process (what was done);
 - an overview/consolidation of key observations through research and engagement using the elements outlined in the interim report (what was heard); and
 - recommendations derived from Phase One research, observations from the Phase Two engagement process, and ongoing deliberation with the Guidance Group.
- iii. The SEA recommendations can be classified as those that are quick and low barrier to act on (i.e., low-hanging fruit) versus longer term that would require implementation planning. The final SEA Report will include recommendations related to implementation, future study or consultation and possible considerations for the monitoring phase.

Deliverable: *The final SEA report will be provided to Hockey Canada and OSIC and available to be published by OSIC.*

PHASE THREE: IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The work for this phase would be proposed as the Phase Two process is winding down and could be conducted by the current SEA team or others.